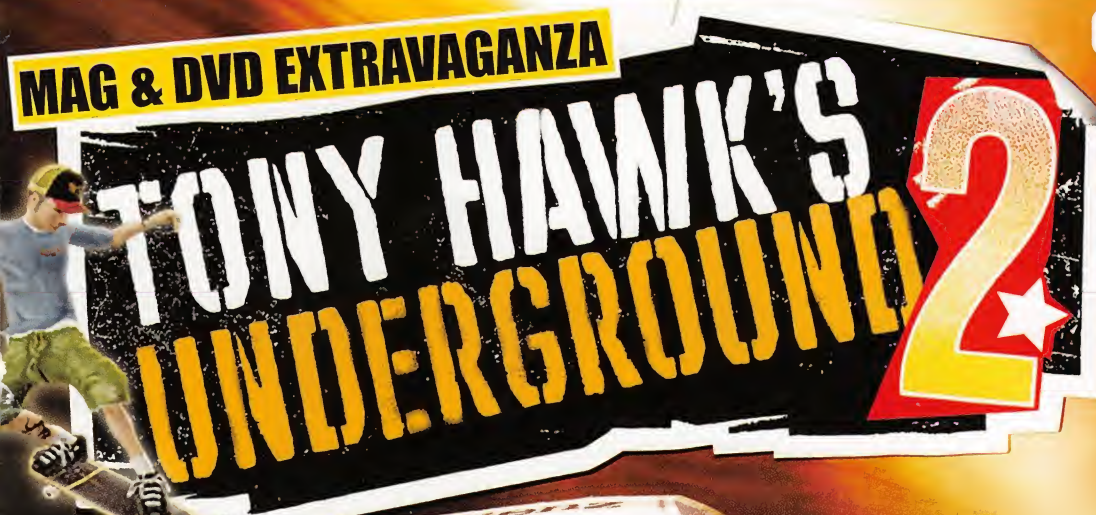


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YOU WILL LOSE AND I WILL WIN."
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Silent Hill 4: The Room

You don't want to see this sickening filth. Do you?

Tekken 5

Giving fighting games a massive punch in the nads.



Sega SuperStars

EyeToy plus Sega equals gameplay hilarity!

PSW WELCOME

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EDITORIAL

So, I went to London this month on an all expenses paid trip to see *GTA: San Andreas* in action. For every minute I spent with the game, I estimate that I spent about an hour either living it up in a luxury hotel or drinking myself stupid on Rockstar's seemingly limitless bartab. For the sake of pure decadence, sometimes I'd be drinking myself stupid *while* living it up in a luxury hotel. And all this happened barely a week after I'd written an editorial saying that games journalists are not thrill to the gift-giving whims of multinational software publishers.

The irony is not lost on me.

But, see, at least I'm telling you about it. At least I'm making everything clear so that there aren't any false pretenses. Yes, Rockstar sent me on a very expensive (and arguably unnecessary) trip to London to see *San Andreas*. Yes, that experience will probably colour my view of the game such that I am likely to see it in a more favourable light now. I'm not going to deny that. I'm not an objective fact reporting robot that can produce content independently of outside stimuli. I do my job within a context and that context influences the work I do. Subjectivity is the nature of the beast and to pretend otherwise would be absurd.

But this isn't necessarily a bad thing - quite the opposite, in fact. Contrary to what your seventh grade science teacher may have told you, subjectivity does not obscure or distort the facts. What

subjectivity does is *breathe life* into the facts. Yeah, I could've gone down the objective journalist jerkoff route and written my *San Andreas* preview as if I had played the game in a vacuum. I could've told you all about Rockstar's latest as if I were merely reporting my observations free of personal opinion and subjective biases. In fact, to do so would have been extraordinarily easy... so why didn't I do it?

Well, there are two reasons, actually. The first is that previews like that are fucking *boring*. Really boring. Boring with a capital god-damn 'B'. If you want to read a rehashed press release padded out with a feature list, then just skip the middle man and go straight to an official website. I don't think that our opinions are more important than information about the games we cover, but I *do* think that our opinions *about* said information are what constitute an entertaining read and make our magazine unique.

This leads me my second reason for taking an unashamedly subjective approach to games journalism - *identity*. What would *PSW* be if the people who make it happen removed all trace of their personalities from the magazine? What would set us apart from the myriad of other magazines and websites out there? *Nothing*. We are *PSW* because *PSW* is us. We all have our personal biases and opinions here - and the main reason you know you can trust us is because we admit that.

/ DANIEL STAINES

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E3 NEWS SPECIAL!

The greatest video game show on Earth exposed!

HERE'S A QUICK RECAP FOR THOSE who missed last month's PSW: every year there's an enormous video game show in L.A. called E3 at which every software publisher on planet Earth shows its upcoming games for the next year and beyond. We were there. We saw everything. But last issue we barely had the time and space to scratch the surface of the event. Exclusive first screens of the new *Lord of the Rings* game, *Devil May Cry 3* and *TimeSplitters Future Perfect* were merely a taster of things to come. Because this month we've got EVERYTHING.

Detailed in this month's Global section are the hottest games you'll be playing in 2004/2005. Games like *Tony Hawk's Underground 2*, *Tekken 5*, *Goldeneye: Rogue Agent*, *Midnight Club 3*, *The Getaway: Black Monday* and of course, *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*. And there's more – roughly another 100, in fact. Plus the first hands-on playtest anywhere of Sony's awesome new handheld super-console – PlayStation Portable. You'll find most of these games crammed onto this month's epic DVD too. Keep it PSW for exclusive updates on all these titles over the coming months.

Come on then! The more the merrier...

KILLZONE CLANS

KILLZONE MULTIPLAYER REVEALED

Online play and split-screen modes confirmed for the long awaited *Killzone*.

SONY HAS CONFIRMED THAT E3 SHOW-STOPPER KILLZONE will offer online action for up to 12 players as well as a two-player, split-screen team mode when it's released in later this year.

Eight multiplayer maps, some adapted from the single-player game, will be included. Deathmatch games are a given, but the meat of the multiplayer game is the objective-based team games, with one group playing as the ISA and the other as the Helghast forces. Real-time voice chat is supported, which will doubtless prove crucial for planning and executing team strategies.

It's the new single-player details that really have our mouths watering though. Besides the commando Templar, female assassin Luger and heavy-weapons specialist Rico, the fourth playable character – whose identity has remained secret until now – is called Hakka. He's a spy who defected from the Helghast and is certain to be at the centre of one or two plot twists.

One early scene we witnessed had Helghast soldiers dropping from gunships, the eerie red glow from their masked eyes piercing the dark levels. It's a cracking opening and sets a high standard for the city sieges and jungle warfare to follow. Make no mistake: this will be huge!



BEST OF THE REST



JACKIE CHAN ADVENTURES

Based on the eponymous cartoon, this action adventure features all the kung fu moves you'd expect from Mr Chan, plus a range of EyeToy mini-games.



RISE OF THE KANSAI

Sequel to last year's *The Mark of Kri* with a brand new combat system that lets you lock onto nine opponents at once plus some rather splendid online co-op play.



INDYCAR SERIES 2005

Codemasters updates its high-speed, oval track racer with online racing for up to eight players, 15 tracks, and improved PS2-controlled drivers. Review next month.



THE LAST JOB

Pull off heists as a gang of four criminals in this third-person action game. Each job is split into four phases where your performance in one affects the next.



DJ - DECKS & FX

Sony's music mixing software features over 50 licensed tracks to mix, scratch and sample to your heart's content. This year's rival to MTV Music Generator 3.



DUTY CALLS!

Call of Duty: Finest Hour to be tailor-made for PS2.

FAR FROM BEING A STRAIGHT PORT OF the original WWII-themed PC shooter, *Call of Duty: Finest Hour* is being re-built from the ground up especially for PS2 – with brand new missions, extra characters and more driveable vehicles.

Playable characters will include an American GI, a British commando, a female Russian sniper and an African-American tanker. Their related missions cover the final three years of the war, featuring solo assignments that'll overlap with more squad-based objectives.

We're pleased to report that the game already looks very impressive. The assault on Stalingrad is spectacular, with up to 200 soldiers on screen at once all charging up a hill to the burning city. Due for release in October, we'll be only too happy to enlist.



MARS ATTACKS!

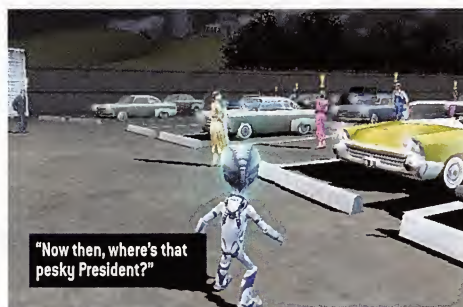
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Obliterate puny earthlings and *Destroy All Humans!*

MANKIND IS UNDER THREAT FROM UFOS AND alien abduction – only this time you're the one plotting Earth's pillage and destruction.

You play Cryptosproidium-137, Crypto for short; a wee member of the Furon race who visits Earth to bring back human brain stems. You can hypnotise, abduct, levitate and read the minds of humans and animals – or simply wipe them out with space guns like the Quantum Deconstructor and Zap-o-Matic.

The gameplay looks to be impressively open-ended, with five massive environments to explore and the ability to assume the identity of humans. It's being made by the same people behind *Mercenaries* and *Star Wars: Battlefront*, so we're expecting big things come Feb 2005.



THE DUKES OF HAZZARD: RETURN OF THE GENERAL LEE

Mission-based racing game that's similar to *Starsky & Hutch*, but with the emphasis on stunts and being chased by the local sheriff.



PLAYBOY: THE MANSION

Think a filthier version of *The Sims* as you build the *Playboy* mansion, control the magazine, 'train' Playmates and oversee photo-shoots. Nice work if you can get it.



THE INCREDIBLES

Based on the Pixar Studios film, this mix of combat, racing and puzzle-solving puts you in control of a family of reluctant superheroes with powers of invisibility and elasticity.

THE NO.1 RACING GAME OF 2004





DUST CLOUDS

RALLYING CRY



The makers of *WRC 4* have declared war on rival rally games.

SANDWICHED UNCOMFORTABLY

between *Richard Burns* and *Colin McRae* in the PS2 release schedule, Sony's official FIA rally game has come out fighting with a daunting line-up of new game modes and features.

Over 100 stages, all the 2004 cars and drivers, 16 WRC locations (including the new events in Mexico and Japan) and two

never-before-seen rally cars are just a few of the features being promised. That's before we even get to the all-new Network Play, which'll allow players to race any stage against the clock or other drivers.

Career mode will follow a professional driver through various stages of his career in an effort to reach the top – learning skills such as car set-up and repairing the

car under pressure to earn a drive at the highest level. Away from competition *WRC 4*'s new test tracks will allow players to test the limits of their machinery and car-handling skills in various skid pan, giant slalom and free-roaming areas.

WRC 4 is currently scheduled for an October 2004 release. To keep ahead of the chasing pack before then, keep it *PSW*.



BOND AWOL

WHO NEEDS BOND?

Goldeneye: Rogue Agent impresses the critics despite absence of 007.

PLAYED BY PSW AT THE RECENT E3 GAME SHOW, EA's *Goldeneye: Rogue Agent* proves that you don't need the chiselled features and trademark pulling power of 007 himself to make a good Bond game.

Bond appears only briefly in the opening level – set inside Fort Knox – fighting alongside your MI6 character to prevent Goldfinger from detonating a nuclear device. Several dead henchmen later, you're booted out of Her Majesty's Secret Service for use of excessive force. Following your dismissal you team up with Goldfinger to wrestle control of SPECTRE from legendary baddie Dr No. No, really. The game might be lacking in personal appearances by Mr Bond, but there's definitely no shortage of supervillains.

The story is a massive departure from previous Bond games, but the absence of 007 doesn't detract from the fantastic play experience. New gameplay devices – such as carrying two weapons at once and firing them individually – help keep things fresh. And

we're particularly looking forward to the four-way Deathmatch mode, with a great new bounty system that awards points to each player (based on the number of kills) that can then be stolen by taking away their final health point.

Rogue Agent is due for release in November.





WITH THE
HOTTEST
CARS...



EYE OF THE TIGER

RING STINGER

Rocky: Legends leaves us battered and bruised, but happy.

A SURPRISE HIT A THIS YEAR'S E3 show was *Rocky: Legends* — Ubisoft's prequel to the original *Rocky* arcade brawler. Featuring characters from the movie series and an all-new Career mode, it promises to pack one hell of a punch when it arrives in October.

Choose from Apollo Creed, Clubber Lang (Mr. T), Ivan Drago (Dolph Lundgren) and, of course, Rocky Balboa himself in the Career mode and take your fighter from amateur right through to professional, unlocking extra fighters, venues and costumes along the way.

There are 26 new fighters to choose from in addition to those of the original game, bringing the tally up to an impressive 40. Like the recent *Fight Night 2004*, there are training mini-games to upgrade your skills with, each boxer having five sessions tailored specifically for them. For example, Rocky's is a chicken-chasing game lifted from the *Rocky 2* movie.

In the two years since the first *Rocky* game, heavyweight *Fight Night 2004* has taken the boxing crown with its intuitive analogue stick control system. Quite how *Rocky: Legends* will stack up remains to be seen. Let's just hope it doesn't follow the rapid decline of successive *Rocky* movie sequels.



NEED FOR SPEED
UNDERGROUND



HUNTER KILLER

PREDATOR ON THE PS2 PROWL

The alien hunter is set to travel through time on a mission to save his species.

VIVENDI HAS ANNOUNCED THAT PREDATOR: CONCRETE Jungle is coming to PlayStation2 later this year. Players take on the role of everyone's favourite alien killing machine in a third-person action adventure and must defend the Predator race from a rival species intent on wiping them all out.

Making use of the full range of established Predator weapons – including cloaking shields, thermal visors and 'plasmacasters' – you'll have the choice to hunt your prey with honour in the traditional Predator way, or just kill things indiscriminately. The game is set in both the 1930s and the 2030s which, at the very least, should ensure some interesting contrasts in level design.

Along with unique weapons, players will also have the ability to customise the Predator's fighting style for different types of prey. And with killing and skinning your victims an important part of the game, *Predator: Concrete Jungle* is shaping up to be every internet fanboy's dream come true.



HIGH-OCTANE

GT4 OPEN TO ALL ONLINE

Sony has dribbled out further details of *Gran Turismo 4*'s online prowess.

THE FEVERISH BUILD UP TO GRAN TURISMO 4'S release continued at the recent E3 game show when a new playable version of the game was unveiled.

During the show Sony also revealed some more details about the game's online capabilities – online spectators will now be able to watch up to five players duking it out around the track.

Other new features recently announced include the all-new Photo mode. This will let you take your favourite cars to any tack and photograph them from any angle with a variety of photographic filters. The term 'car porn' has never been so apt!

The number of cars to choose from is nothing short of awesome, offering a huge range of classic and modern cars to throw around the game's mixture of real life and fantasy courses. One real life course deserving of a special mention is the 14-mile long Nurburgring. This German epic is rightly considered one of the most testing tracks in the world – and it's all here in glorious detail.

With the full game set to offer over 500 cars – including the awesome Lamborghini Murcielago and the Aston Martin DB4 – alongside 100 tracks, there is no doubt that *Gran Turismo 4* is set to become PS2's definitive racer come release.



BEST OF THE REST



ATV OFF-ROAD FURY 3

Latest in the off-road racing series from Climax. Features online racing, improved graphics and a whole bunch of new vehicles. We love this game more than life itself.



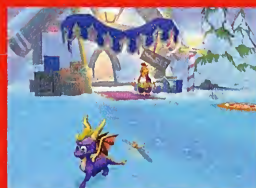
ENTHUSIA RACING

Super-realistic racing in the *Gran Turismo* mould that includes hundreds of licensed cars and a comprehensive menu of tuning options for you to fiddle with.



EMERGENCY MAYHEM

Did you ever want to be a fireman? Well, here's a crazy arcade game that's based around the emergency services that contains over 70 mini-games for hours of party fun.



SPYRO: A HERO'S TAIL

The little purple dragon returns for another classic platform adventure. And he's bringing a whole bunch of new enemies, levels, gadgets and moves with him too.



DEAD TO RIGHTS 2

More crime fighting capers starring one man and his dog. This time we've been told to expect a greater emphasis on cinematic slow-motion fighting. How original.

MONSTER MASH

GRAND THEFT EVIL

Zombies and cars collide (literally) in *Dead Rush*.

DEAD RUSH IS BEST DESCRIBED AS GTA meets *Resident Evil* – expect to fight legions of the living dead in a huge open city environment on foot with a huge selection of weapons, or in one of the many cars available.

Zombies will grab onto cars and must be torn off by shooting them, crashing the car head-on into a lamppost, or scraping the car against walls. Luckily, it's also possible to repair and upgrade your vehicles with spare parts robbed from car wreckage littering the roadside.

Although there is a mission structure, the game is set in a free-form universe, much like *GTA*, so expect to spend plenty of time mucking about with zombies. Sadly, there's a fair wait involved – *Dead Rush* isn't due for release until early 2005.



Shaun of the Dead? No, just Redfern on Monday.

TK-421

FEEL THE FORCE

Play online as a Stormtrooper in *Star Wars: Battlefront*.

STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT IS ALL SET TO TAKE THE *Star Wars* world online for PlayStation2 owners this year. The 16-player shooter will offer you the chance to take the role of Stormtrooper, Rebel Soldier, or one of 30 unit types and battle in 15 levels set across 10 different planets.

Taking on the part of lowly grunts rather than their Jedi masters is a novel idea for a *Star Wars* game, and a move that PSW approves of – particularly when it includes the chance to don the legendary white outfit

of a Stormtrooper. The newly-revealed Hoth level gave us the first taste of driving the legendary AT-AT, a truly amazing experience.

The level of detail and authentic *Star Wars* feel of the game is stunning. With the prospect of 16 players running around gunning each other down online in a huge selection of accurate movie locations and vehicles, you can bet this game will be huge.

Look forward very much to playing it this October, you will.



This could be you. Now, now! Contain yourself!



Ride Tauntauns, or cut them up and keep warm.



ACE COMBAT 5

It's the latest evolution of Namco's long-running air combat sim aimed at *Top Gun* wannabes. *Ace Combat 5* includes 30 missions and over 50 licensed planes. Chocks away then!



SAMURAI SHOWDOWN 5

The latest in the sword fighting series from legendary Japanese beat 'em up specialist SNK is finally coming to PS2. Grab your sword and get ready to rumble.



LAMBORGHINI FX

A new racing title from Titus that adds weapons, stunts and crazy courses to this famous brand of Italian supercars. Sounds like a waste of the Lambo licence to us.



...AND THE HOTTEST UNDERGROUND RACING...





ALL-SEEING EYE

EYETOY EXPLODES!

Sony unveils new EyeToy games and makes PS2 videophone calls a reality!

THE RISE AND RISE OF SONY'S EYETOY LOOKS SET to continue in 2004 and beyond. Not only did E3 witness a dramatic rise in the number of games which include some kind of EyeToy functionality, Sony also shocked everyone by introducing an EyeToy-controlled hoverboard sim and PS2 videophone chat system, both due before Christmas.

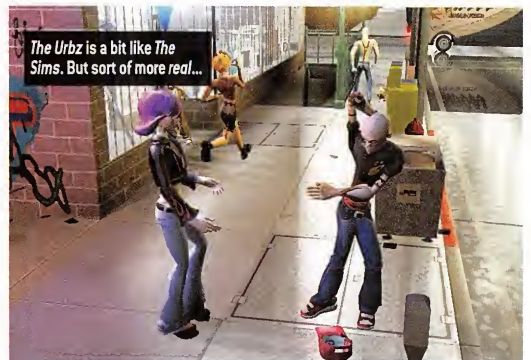
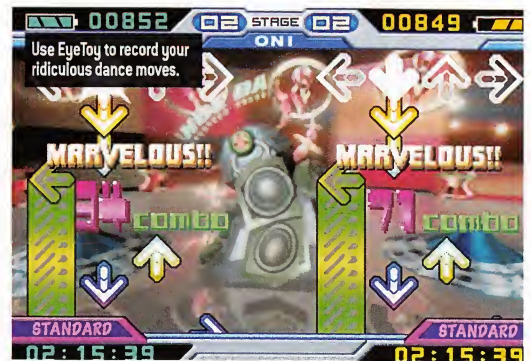
Elsewhere, there were plenty of games on show that use the EyeToy in various ways, from putting your face in a game (*The Urbz*) to recording your dance moves (*Dance Dance Revolution Extreme*).

Sony's new hoverboard sim is called *EyeToy: AntiGrav*, and it's the first *EyeToy* game to feature

coloured armbands and a lot of surf-style posing as you pretend to ride a gravity-defying hoverboard, much like Michael J. Fox in *Back to The Future II*.

The Sony-developed videophone system *EyeToy: Chat* will allow you to see and speak to anyone else with a PS2, *EyeToy* and network adapter. In addition you can chat with sixteen people at once and play chess, draughts and something they're calling 'Naval War', but we're calling 'Battleships' in joyous disregard of any copyright issues.

It seems that EyeToy has finally outgrown its tag as a kooky peripheral for kids. And with the extra support it's now getting, this could be EyeToy's year.



IT'S GOOD TO CHAT

Do a 'Ray Martin' with Sony's latest camera-gizmo thing, *EyeToy: Chat*.



EyeToy: Chat may not look too exciting, given the selection of dull mini-games (like drafts, above) on offer, but imagine chatting to mates and actually SEEING them on your TV. There's no fee as the whole thing is done through broadband and you can speak to PS2 gamers ALL OVER THE WORLD. Hell, you might even meet a Californian honey and get hitched...

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TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2





SK8IN RULZ

TONY Vs. THE WORLD!

Tony Hawk's Underground 2: World Destruction Tour invites Bam Margera to the party and goes large in a Jackass style.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2: WORLD Destruction Tour is putting the stupidity back into skating with a ton of new features and insane vehicles to drive. There's a definite Jackass feel to the latest in the venerable Hawk's series, with mindless self-damage almost as important as slick tricking. That's not to say that there's no gameplay changes, of course. New stunts involve graffiti and sticker slapping to trigger massive points, and there's six new international

locations to explore, all with plenty more in the way of interactive scenery.

In keeping with the Jackass theme, Tony Hawk now enjoys equal billing with everyone's favourite danger monkey Bam Margera. Team Hawk and Team Bam compete to win points, and besides helping to drive one team to victory, you can also play as special guest stars and famous skaters as well. You can design your own graffiti tags and spray them in prominent places for extra pointage, as >

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!

If you thought *THUG 2* couldn't get any more ludicrous, check this out.



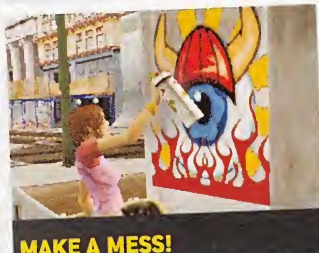
DRESS UP!

Play as 'guest characters' like US President Thomas Jefferson here and emulate *Jackass* by hurting yourself while dressed in a silly outfit. We're rooting for a nappy costume. Whaaah!



SPAZZ OUT!

For some unknown reason, if you decide to have a massive mental moment right in the middle of a trick, kicking your board away and acting like you're five, you'll get mad points. It's kind of genius.



MAKE A MESS!

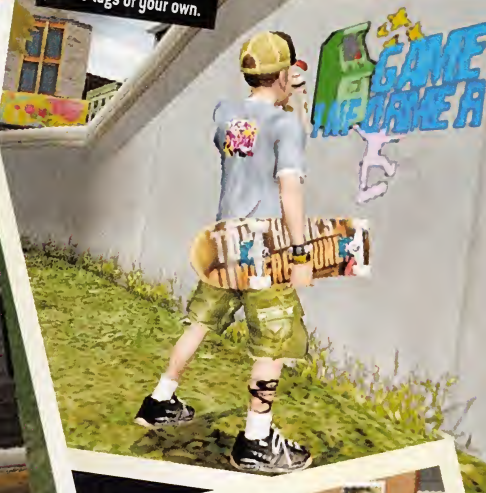
Design your own (probably obscene) tags and put them all over the city. Slapping stickers down creates slo-mo moments too. What, you were expecting some gritty realism? Oh, pur-lease.

Is it skating or is it pure ballet? Well, duh...

224 X 1
BS Smith

Some people just can't help showing off...

Replace this rubbish with puerile tags of your own.



Proof that dead white men make good skaters.

6,106 X 9

Time slows down when you sticker slap. Why?

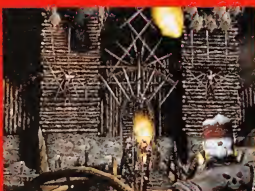
750 X 1
Sticker Slap

BEST OF THE REST



RUMBLE ROSES

This girl-on-girl wrestler includes a 'hands-free' option for those who want to watch two PS2-controlled bikini-wearing models going at it in a mud pit. We're not kidding.



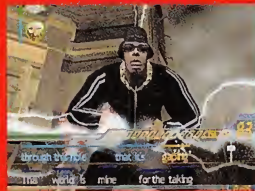
DEADLANDS

A wild west shoot 'em up with a novel twist: your character is dead and out for revenge. Whack seven cow boys and you'll get back to heaven, strangely.



SPY FICTION

Being able to assume the identity, voice and other characteristics of any enemy is the intriguing gimmick of this otherwise familiar-looking stealthy-action type title.



GET ON DA MIC

Hip-hop Karaoke game with a Career mode that features dodgy agents and sex-starved groupies. You can also compose and perform your own freestyle masterpiece. Word up.



TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2

Konami has included a four-player co-op mode in the sequel, as well as the ability to unlock one of the arcade games. But that's it, really.

BOARD STUPID!

Boards are for nancies and Avril.
THUG 2 lets you ride this little lot.



SEGWAY!

The geekiest form of transport yet discovered by man, the battery powered Segway scooter is also possibly your easiest route to personal injury and ridicule. Ever tried grinding one down some stairs?



HOSPITAL BED!

Oh yes, Mr THUG 2, very funny. Make fun of the afflicted by doing stunts on hospital beds, probably involving people dressed up as comedy invalids. Wait a minute, that is actually quite funny. Hey, nice one!

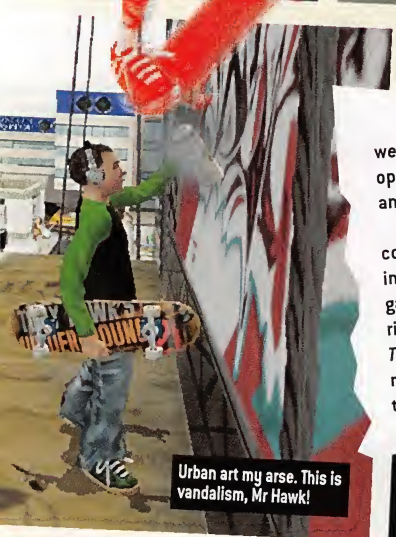


HOT DOG STANDS!

THUG 1 had a thing about smashing up peanut vendors' stands. Now you'll be able to pilot one of these unwieldy slop-mobiles down stairs and off cliffs. But can you sell hot dogs to the drunk and desperate?



Say it with spray and get your logo all round town.



Urban art my arse. This is vandalism, Mr Hawk!

well as all the usual customisable options for parks, characters, boards and the rest.

But it's the mad amount of danger-courting insanity that we're most interested in. *Tony Hawk's Underground* gave you the chance to drive cars and ride lawnmowers, but *World Destruction Tour* adds a new layer of silliness with all manner of dumb vehicles to trash – see the Board Stupid box above for more

details. Bizarrely, if you decide to throw a massive wobbly in the middle of your trick, you'll earn an unholy amount of points. You'll even be able to pelt passers-by with rotten tomatoes, should you so choose. That's kind of cool, is it not? We certainly think so.

Those who preferred old school *Tony Hawk's* action will be relieved to know that if the comedy plot of the main game starts to pall, you can relive your old *Hawk's* moments with a slew of two-minute tasks in the all-new (or should

that be all-old?) Classic mode. They've even added a few tarted-up levels from the old *Tony Hawk's* games to make it that much more authentic.

The first *THUG* game had a fair few teething troubles along with a whole lot of mad new features. It looks like developer Neversoft is continuing with the more relaxed, jokey vibe of the first *Underground* game, but in a slightly more confident strain. So we're expecting it to be polished, feature-packed... and just plain stupid cool. Expect to see *THUG 2* this November.



WORMS FORTS UNDER SIEGE

Build castle defences and then break down your opponent's with 30 weapons: that's the gist of the latest *Worms* game. Settings range from Egypt to Medieval Camelot.



SEGA SUPERSTARS

Sonic the Hedgehog, *Super Monkey Ball*, *Virtua Fighter*, *Samba de Amigo* and others get the EyeToy treatment. Looks incredibly cheesy, but will be incredibly good fun.



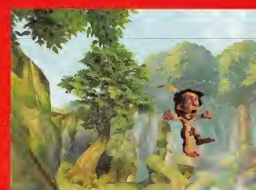
METAL SLUG 4 / 5

Combo pack of the fourth and fifth side-scrolling action games. Expect the usual hectic battles against massive bosses, plus some wacky new weapons and vehicles.



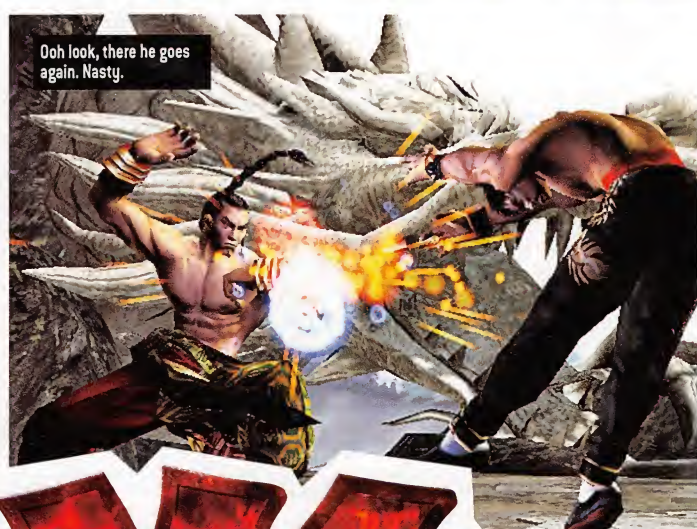
LEISURE SUIT LARRY: MAGNA CUM LAUDE

Risible adventure romp as Larry attempts to get women drunk enough to have sex with them. Utterly objectionable in every way.



TAK 2: THE STAFF OF DREAMS

Tak is still on the trail of the sorcerer Tlaloc in this sequel to *Tak and the Power of Juju*, now with the ability to possess animals and turn himself into one. Sounds nice.



TEKKEN 5

SECONDS OUT

TEKKEN NO PRISONERS

Three extra characters and destructible scenery in the stunning new Namco bruiser.

THREE NEW FIGHTERS ARE TO GRACE NAMCO'S latest installment of its fighting spectacular, *Tekken 5*.

The three new characters have been announced as part of the tenth anniversary edition of the legendary beat 'em up. Unfortunately though, while the arcade machine is due to appear in Australia later this year, it seems unlikely that the PlayStation2 version will arrive this side of Christmas.

The influence of Japanese arcade favourite *Virtua*

Fighter 4: Evolution is clear in both the new characters and changes to the fighting system, although *Tekken 5* seems to be bringing plenty of its own party tricks to the table too. Not least of these are the fully interactive (you can smash 'em up!) and stunningly detailed fighting arenas, which include a gorgeous field of flowers; a rooftop with huge, panoramic views during a stunning sunset; and a burning Dojo that features some astonishing flame effects.

Looking closer at the three newbies, it would appear that Raven is a take on Wesley Snipe's *Blade* character; Feng Wei is clearly inspired by Bruce Lee, and Asuka Kazama is Jin Kazama's sister. A full character list is yet to be released, but will include *Tekken* regulars Jin, Paul, Yoshimitsu, Steve, Christie, Fox, Law, Jack, Julie, Hwoorang, Nina, and King.

Take a look on this month's DVD and see the future of PS2 brawling with your very own eyes.



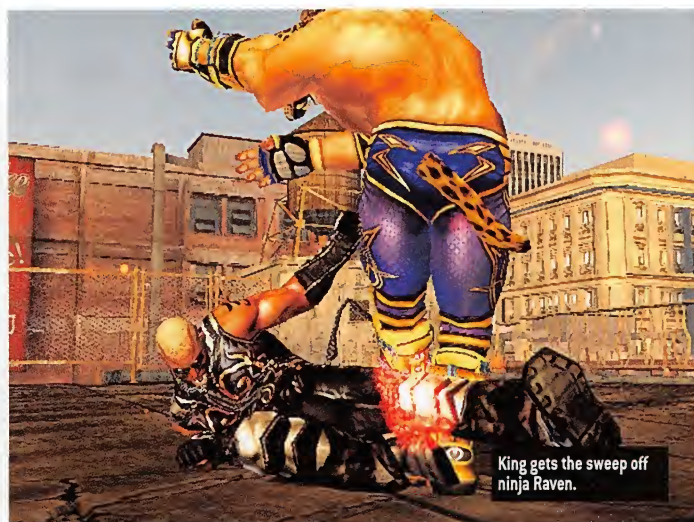
Steady love, or you'll do yourself a mischief.



Asuka poses before kicking heads in.



Paul isn't taking any of Raven's shit.



King gets the sweep off ninja Raven.



RAVEN

A ninja seemingly copied wholesale from Wesley Snipe's character in *Blade*. Uses a style similar to Kage (the ninja from *Virtua Fighter*), which involves lots of somersaults and acrobatic moves.

ASUKA KAZAMA

A soft-style fighter, Asuka seems to use an Aikido technique, which means turning her opponents force against them. We expect plenty of reversals and throws for Asuka, just like *Virtua Fighter*'s Aoi.

FENG WEI

Seems to be some kind of Shaolin monk. Uses a very direct, aggressive style featuring lots of elbows and body checks, all of which reminds of *Virtua Fighter*'s original poster boy Akira.



ONE IN THE HAND

PSP – WE'VE PLAYED IT!

PSW gets hands-on with Sony's stunning new handheld console, but then fails miserably to steal one...

PLAYSTATION PORTABLE HOGGED THE LIMELIGHT AT E3 AND REFUSED TO BUDGE.

Nothing else even came close. Running movies and games in public for the very first time, it left everyone stunned by its combination of power, design, and functionality.

We queued for over an hour to get a hands-on with the PSP and it was worth every second. The controls mirror those of a standard PS2 controller, with Circle, Square, Triangle and X buttons all laid out within easy reach to the right of the screen, and directional buttons plus analogue stick to the left. The screen itself is nothing short of astounding – 4.5 inches, backlit, in widescreen 16:9 ratio, and running at 480x272 resolution in 24-bit colour. The picture clarity is amazing, as demonstrated by trailers for the new *Spider-Man 2* and *Resident Evil Apocalypse* films running on PSP via the new UMD disc format. Both looked amazingly smooth and crisp.

The games on display – including *Gran Turismo 4 Mobile* – showed huge potential,

almost matching the graphical standard of PlayStation2. Other titles included *Metal Gear Acid*, *Ridge Racer*, *Tony Hawk Pro Skater*, *Tiger Woods PGA Tour*, *Need for Speed Underground*, *NBA Jam*, *Dynasty Warriors*, *Ape Escape*, *Spiderman 2* and *Armoured Core*.

All this gaming goodness is backed up by memory stick support which allows MP3 playback. And optional extras which include a digital video camera and a GPRS add-on to turn PSP into a phone. The flexibility and power of the device are matched by its quite incredible looks. The only fly currently squirming in Sony's ointment is the issue of battery life, which looks likely to clock in at somewhere over 10 hours for music but dropping as low as two hours for movie playback, which isn't much use if you want to watch *The Lord of the Rings*.

PlayStation Portable will launch in Japan this side of Christmas, with a UK release currently scheduled for March 2005, priced at £250. Start counting the days.

The UMD discs are around the size of a MiniDisc.



PSP EXPLAINED

1/ DIGITAL PAD

It's the direction pad. Pretty easy that one.

2/ ANALOGUE

The analogue control – slides along a flat plane, unlike the PlayStation 2's stick.

3/ SHOULDER BUTTONS

Only two instead of the PS2's four.

4/ SPEAKERS

Stereo speakers are built in for high-quality audio.

5/ SCREEN

4.3" of widescreen goodness, ideal for high-resolution gaming.

6/ MEMORY CARD

Uses standard Sony Memory sticks.

7/ WIRELESS

This light signals that the machine is using its Wi-Fi capabilities.

8/ HOME

Returns you to the PSP's main menu.

9/ SCREEN BUTTON

Used to turn the screen backlight off to conserve battery life while playing music.

10/ SOUND BUTTON

Turn off the sound to increase battery life.

11/ POWER

Signifying that the machine is on.

12/ HOLD

Locks the machine's buttons to stop the PSP going mental in your pocket.



PALM STEALTH

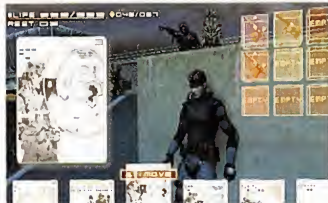
POCKET SNAKE

Metal Gear Acid sneaks onto PlayStation Portable.

THE MOST EXCITING NEW TITLE ANNOUNCED FOR PLAYSTATION PORTABLE IS without doubt *Metal Gear Acid* – the latest in the Solid Snake series.

The big surprise is that this new game will not be stealth action in the traditional style and will instead be a turn-based tactical strategy game with a card battle system. Snake is moved square by square around a map to sneak up on guards. The cards represent your weapons and include all the *Metal Gear* standards, including assault rifles, claymores and sniper rifles. Other cards represent actions, such as crouching and distracting the guards. All these abilities, such as moving and shooting, have a cost attached to them, limiting the options available to snake during any turn.

Metal Gear Acid is showing very early on just how powerful PSP can be. We expect to see it ready for the launch of the handheld console next spring.



Ultra exciting rear view shot. Nice casing.



AND THE REST...



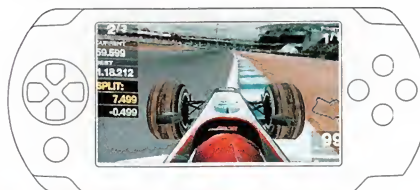
APE ESCAPE

As this was the first game to use the Dual Analogue sticks on the PSOne, it will be interesting to see how it fares with only one analogue stick.



DYNASTY WARRIORS

Koei is never shy when it comes to getting its *Dynasty Warriors* franchise onto new formats. Expect to see this one ready for the launch.



F1 2004

Formula One games really fail to excite us these days. But when it looks this good and runs on a machine slightly larger than a mobile phone, we'll have some.



GRAN TURISMO 4 MOBILE

Certain to be the most in-demand title come launch day, this seminal racer was looking so utterly stunning we couldn't help but be totally amazed.



NBA STREET

A graphically stunning offering with an incredible number of huge, well detailed characters on screen at once. It's just a shame that it's basketball.



NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND

This conversion of the popular racer showed off some really gorgeous lighting effects. And the cars looked shinier than a squaddie's boots on his passing-out parade.



RIDGE RACER

A return for the all-time classic racing game is on the cards after Namco showed off some great footage. We really hope this one makes the cut. Please Santa...



WIPEOUT PURE

Another classic re-imagined for the next generation Sony wonder machine that showed off some serious speed and graphical prowess.

> Siillick, bro!

"Hey, check out my fully sick rims and exhaust mods, bro!"

"SHOW OFF YOUR FULLY PIMPED OUT RIDE TO THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY"

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION

Illegal street racing's all well and good, but when are they going to make a game out of illegal street cow-tipping? That's some exciting shiznit.

> GENRE	RACING
> DEVELOPER	ROCKSTAR SAN DIEGO
> PUBLISHER	ROCKSTAR
> OUT	DECEMBER
> ONLINE	YES

WHILE WE WERE IN LONDON CHECKING OUT *GTA: San Andreas* —

which you can read all about on p.38 — we also had a chance to go hands-on with the latest iteration of the *Midnight Club* franchise, *Midnight Club 3: Dub Edition*. Even at these early stages of development the game is looking absolutely fantastic — both aesthetically and mechanically — and promises to heat up the already intense competition that has come to characterise the illegal street-racing genre of late. And yes, I know this all sounds very hyperbolic in a "thanks for the free trip to London" kind of way, but I'm actually quite serious here: *Midnight Club 3* looks very good. Additionally, it's worth noting that I hate racing games — so when that's coming from me, you know it has to mean something.

DUB IT UP

The most important aspect of *Midnight Club 3* — that which will set it apart from its competitors and is being pushed the most heavily by Rockstar — is the ability to customise your in-game vehicles with a staggering variety of mechanical and cosmetic enhancements (or dubs). We're talking spinning rims, body kits, superchargers, air intakes and those bomb-ass pneumatic suspension systems that make cars bounce up and down as if the road itself were some kind of tar coated trampoline. And because the game will ship with full online functionality, you'll be able to show off your fully pimped out ride to the global community in multiplayer street races. We quite like this aspect of the whole "customisation" thing because it allows players to really express their own personal style online and thus distinguish themselves from the crowd. So, instead of being "Black Nissan Skyline No. 33", you could quite easily become known as "that bastard with the Chrome Cadillac decked out with pneumatic suspension and awesome exhaust modifications".

Of course, modifications don't mean much unless there are lots of vehicles available to modify — so it's not surprising that *Midnight Club 3* comes replete with over 50 licensed vehicles to deck out with phat bling. Cars aren't the only things you'll have in your garage either, as the game will also feature bikes and big ass trucks to joyride with. In fact, we saw one of the bikes in action and were very impressed with just how bloody fast you can go on the damn things. The sense of speed and danger evoked by flying a Harley off the roof of a five-storey condominium is more than merely tangible — it's downright exhilarating.

FIRST OPINIONS

Even though we only saw a very early build of the game, *Midnight Club 3* still managed to leave a very favourable impression on us. The only concern we have so far is that the unashamedly hardcore nature of the title might render it inaccessible to gamers unfamiliar with the intricacies of car modification culture. But even if you don't know your air intakes from your spinning rims, you should still be able to appreciate *Midnight Club's* patented arcade racer gameplay — which, from what we can see, appears to have been tweaked and squeaked to the point of perfection. Expect a full review in *PSW* shortly.

/ DANIEL STAINES

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION **FACT!**

> RUB-A-DUB

Dub Magazine, the authority on dub culture, are acting as creative consultants for *MC3*.

> CELEBRITY CORNER

Famous celebrities currently enamoured with dub culture include Shaquille O'Neil, 50 Cent and Eminem.

> LOCATION, LOCATION

There are three cities featured in *Midnight Club 3* – Atlanta, Detroit and San Diego.

> SMASH!

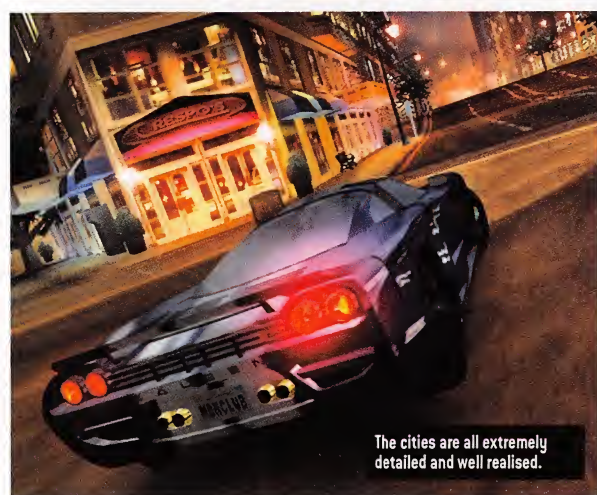
There are tons of shortcuts in each race... and most of them involve driving through a window of some kind.



The bikes in *MC3* are absolutely awesome.



Although not "in-game" per se, these shots are of actual models from the game. They're not renders.

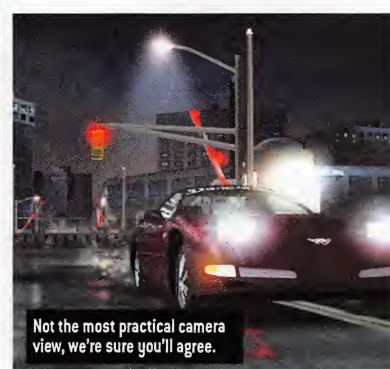


The cities are all extremely detailed and well realised.

"MIDNIGHT CLUB 3 COMES WITH OVER 50 LICENSED VEHICLES TO DECK OUT"



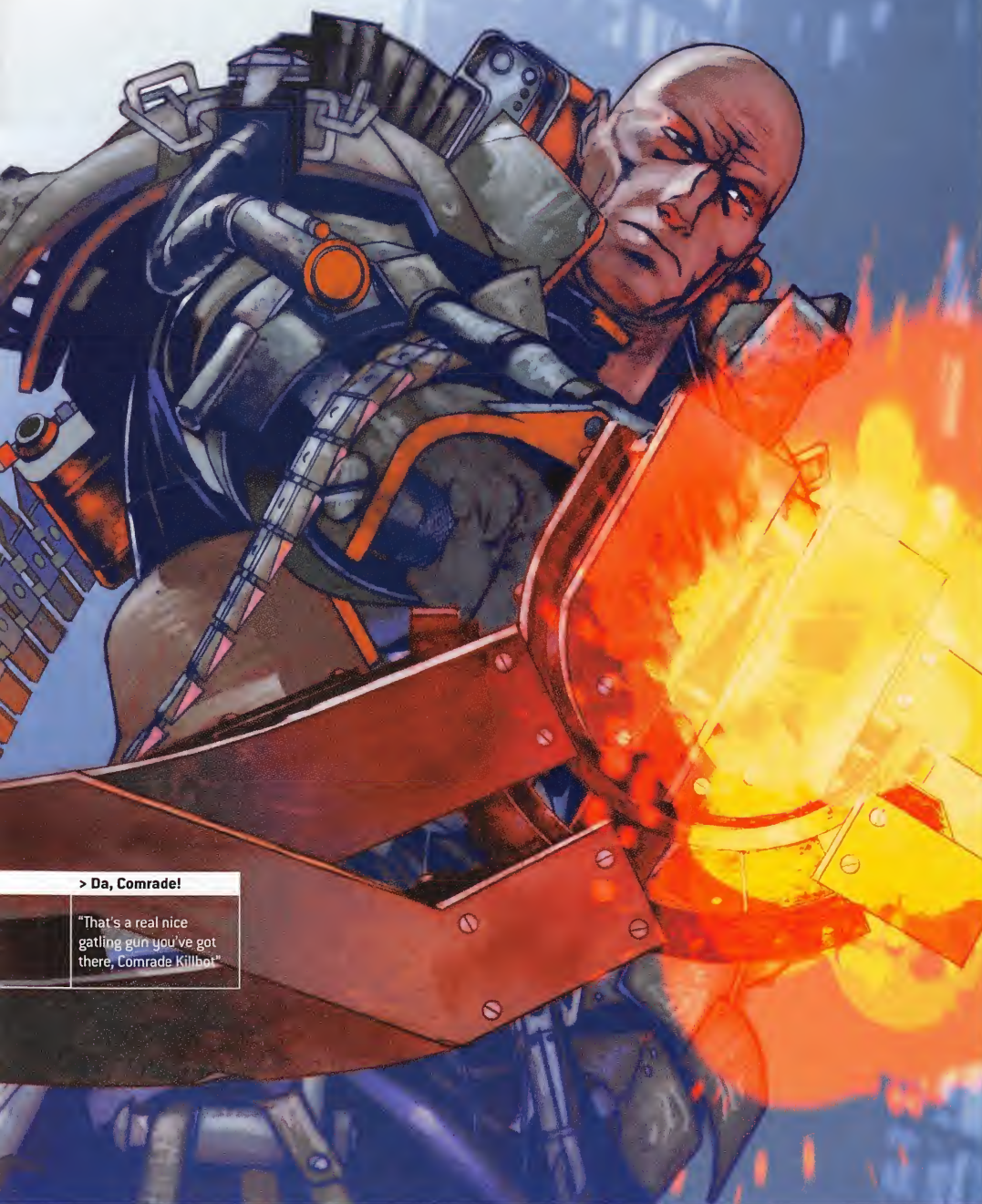
Hopefully, the blatant in-game ads for Dub magazine won't be too common.



Not the most practical camera view, we're sure you'll agree.



Green. It's the colour of money. And crap cars.



> Da, Comrade!

"That's a real nice gatling gun you've got there, Comrade Killbot"

"A FEW GOOD HOURS OF
SOLID SHOOTER FUN"

THE RED STAR

It's just like all your favourite old-school shooters... except, you know, it has more Communists from an alternate reality in it.

> GENRE	SHOOTING
> DEVELOPER	ACCLAIM
> PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
> OUT	SEPTEMBER
> ONLINE	NO

ALTHOUGH WE PREVIEWED *THE RED STAR* JUST A few issues ago in *PSW* #22, we've just got our hands on some nifty new preview code and thought it a good opportunity to offer some updated impressions of a game we think has the potential to be one of the most enjoyable titles released on the PS2 this year. It's not revolutionary and it's not going to make your jaw hit the floor in astonishment, but it will probably make for more than a few good hours of solid shooter fun – and that's all we ever expected.

COMPLIMENTARY CUSTOMISATION

The Red Star's gameplay seems a lot more solid and consistent now. Although the last batch of code we played was enjoyable, it lacked any real depth and quickly became repetitive as a result. The new version has a lot more variation in enemy design and this helps to accentuate the differences in each of the three main characters so that – in co-op mode especially – you really get a sense of contributing to the fight in your own unique way. This is particularly evident when you start to purchase upgrades for your chosen character and develop their individual strengths. For example, while playing the two-player mode, one of us would buy the 'weaker but wider' spread gun while the other would opt for the more powerful concentrated blaster style weapons. This particular brand of complimentary customisation is one of *The Red Star's* main strengths and goes a long way in making both the single player and multiplayer portions of the game addictive as all hell.

Another aspect of the updated code that struck us as significant was the sheer complexity and old-school deviousness of the end-of-level bosses. From what we've seen, most of the bosses take the form of monstrously sized metal behemoths that come replete with numerous guns, cannons, missile launchers and other assorted implements of explosive destruction. Combat with them is pattern-based and you'll often find yourself dodging an entire screen's worth of deadly projectiles while simultaneously trying to destroy multiple weak points at once. It's frantic, often frustrating and quite reminiscent of the much-loved *Metal Slug* series from SNK.

As you will of course know from our previous preview, *The Red Star* is based on a series of graphic novels of the same name... but you'd be kinda hard pressed to find any real evidence of that in the game. From what we can tell, the influence of the comic book is essentially limited to a purely aesthetic level. The characters are the same and the setting's the same, but the story (owing to the very nature of the game) is essentially superfluous and little more than a very flimsy excuse to go about shooting the crap out of hordes of bad guys. Admittedly, the characters and settings are enough to imbue *The Red Star* with a very cool vibe, but it might have been nice to get a few more cut-scenes happening or something like that. You know, just for the fans.

FIRST OPINIONS

There's no doubt that many will find *The Red Star* shallow and repetitive, but old-school fans will relish its simplicity and hardcore gameplay. Gotta love those big ass bosses! Look out for a full review very soon.

/ DANIEL STAINES



THE RED STAR **FACT!**

> GOODIES

You can purchase all kinds of upgrades, including new weapons, health upgrades and special attacks.

> FAST AND FURIOUS

From our experience so far, speedy Makita is easily the best of the three available characters.

> RANK 'EM UP

You are awarded ranks at the end of each level – the higher the rank, the more points you get to buy upgrades.

> INFLUENCES

influences on the creation of *The Red Star* include Star Wars, anime and real world military history. Eclectic!



The enemies look a bit samey, but you'll be too busy killing 'em to care.



Each character comes with their own holo-shield thingy.

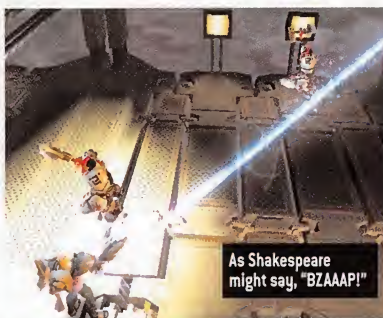


Some foes are only vulnerable to melee attacks.



These turrets provide a tough challenge.

“MOST OF THE BOSSES TAKE THE FORM OF MONSTROUSLY SIZED METAL BEHEMOTHS”



As Shakespeare might say, “BZAAAP!”



Note the enormous melee weapon on his back.



The engine is looks superb, don't you think?



Magic attacks such as this play a big role in the game.



> HASTA LA VISTA, BABY

Yeah, whatever. Mr baby-faced Terminator bloke. Why don't you go suck a lemon, or something.

“REDEMPTION IS A DRUNKEN, LATE-NIGHT TEXT MESSAGE OF A VIDEOGAME.”

TERMINATOR 3: REDEMPTION

Arnie is back! With all his favourite guns. But does the ageing mechanoid deliver more essential PS2 terminations or just a bag of terminal tripe?

> GENRE	ACTION
> DEVELOPER	PARADIGM
> PUBLISHER	ATARI
> OUT	SEPTEMBER
> ONLINE	NO

(PHONE RINGS AND CLICKS TO ANSWERPHONE)

“Hi, this is PSW. Sorry we can't take your call right now. Leave a message and we'll get back to you. Unless you work in PR, in which case, please choose from the following excuses: a) We took the screenshots from a contact in another territory, or b) Four out of ten is actually a very respectable score when you think about it.”
(Answerphone beeps)

“Hi. It's Arnie. The Terminator. Pick up. I know you're screening. Pick up, pick up, pick up. Look, I just wanted to tell you that I'm back in town and that I thought it might be nice if we hooked up. Remember that time when I was being lowered into that vat of bubbling acid and I gave you the thumbs-up? And that other time when I became pregnant and Danny Devito... No. Wait. That was something else...” (Tape runs out)

That's right, folks. Turn your mobile phones off and don't answer the door to strangers, because even though it seems like we only just got rid of him, the Terminator is back on PlayStation2 yet again. How we winced when we caught wind of *Terminator 3: Redemption*, an attempt to redeem the Schwarzenegger brand after the mind-fart that was *Rise of the Machines*. Suffice to say, Arnie needs this one to score big. To coin an old movie cliché, this is his one last shot at the big time. Unnfortunately for him though, initial reports suggest that *Terminator 3: Redemption* looks like a drunken, late-night text message of a videogame, the kind you pay attention to for all the time it takes for your brain meat to decipher 'L8R M8'.

The two biggest differences between *Redemption* and *Rise of the Machines*: 1) the perspective. Whereas last time you saw the action through the eyes of the Terminator, now you see it from over his shoulder. No longer bound by the laws of first-person movement (though shalt not jump more than six inches from the ground), Arnie is far more agile and can run and leap with all the fluidity of a man two-thirds his age. And 2) the Terminator can now commandeer any of the Skynet vehicles he comes upon. If we're honest though, we hardly recognised any of the tanks, planes or jeeps featured in the game so don't get overly excited.

Far more impressive is the scale of the game. The environments – huge, smoking junkyards swathed in searchlights – are by far the most compelling reason to take an interest in *Redemption*. It'll take you upwards of ten minutes to journey from the beginning of a given level to the end, a considerable chunk of time when you consider that you're never travelling at anything less than a ridiculously high speed. The only downside here is that you're never allowed to stray too far from your designated path.

(Phone rings and clicks to answerphone) “It's Arnie again. What if I drop by the office? I'll only stay five minutes and I'll bring a bag of Twisties.” “Hello, PSW. Aha, Arnie old mate! Sure, we'll be in after three. And bring a bottle of Pepsi.”

FIRST OPINION

Redemption looks unlikely to salvage anything from the mangled wreckage of the *Terminator 3* licence. Unless the developer can find a way to replace the pocket calculator currently powering their machine with a NASA supercomputer, the curtain will finally fall on Arnie's PS2 career.

JON BROWN



Arnie + big machine gun = death an destruction.



Watch the sky, 'cos you'll be fired upon from all angles.



"I'll be back". Please God let it not be true.



If you find a cannon emplacement – use it!



You have to get your hands dirty quite often.



Always keep an eye on your rear bumper.



If nothing else, it's a big game with big levels.

BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED

The idiot's guide to Arnie's most basic functions.



1 As in *Rise of the Machines*, you can switch to robot-eye view at any stage in order to get a redder, slightly less clear picture of what's going on.



2 When you run out of bullets you have to start scrapping with your fists. There's a fair amount of hand-to-hand in *Redemption*.



3 The more damage Arnie takes, the more synthetic skin falls off. By the end, if he's been battered enough, he'll look like a metal skeleton.



4 The Terminator doesn't wear a wristwatch, but he should. Lots of the missions in *Redemption* take place under strict timed conditions.



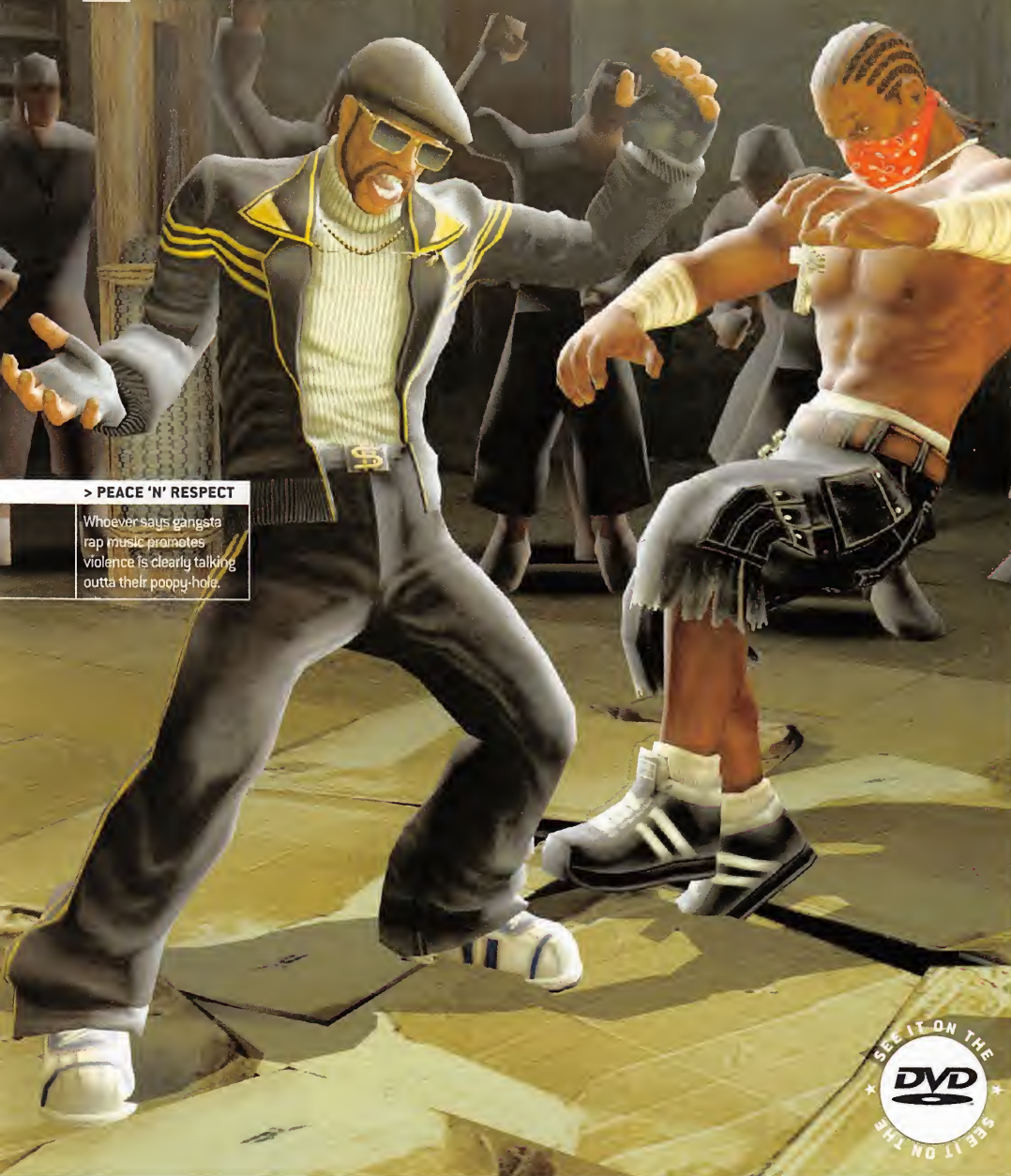
TERMINATOR 3: REDEMPTION FACT!

> STUPID MACHINE
Desperate to play *Redemption*? Hunt down a copy of the demo disk that shipped with *Rise of the Machines*.

> ENDO THE ROAD
The more bullets Arnie takes, the more flesh he loses. By the end he's a walking endoskeleton.

> GRAVE MISTAKE
In one key scene you're forced to chase the T-X in a stolen hearse under heavy fire from SWAT agents.

> RAW DEAL
Remarkably enough, this is only the second time Arnie's likeness has appeared in a videogame.



> PEACE 'N' RESPECT

Whoever says gangsta rap music promotes violence is clearly talking outta their poopy-hole.

“FLOAT LIKE A BUTTERFLY... STING LIKE SEAN PAUL.”

DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NEW YORK

The legends of Hip-Hop — past and present — gather together in The Big Apple to duke it out with broken bottles and knives.

> GENRE	FIGHTING
> DEVELOPER	EA
> PUBLISHER	EA
> OUT	OCTOBER
> ONLINE	NO

SEQUELS AND ANNUAL UPDATES FROM

Electronic Arts are not usually known for their love of innovation or wholesale change. But that's definitely not the case here. *Def Jam: Fight for New York* isn't just a rota change of Hip-Hop stars fighting in this season's colours — it's a whole new game.

The old *Def Jam Vendetta* was a fairly simple, almost comedic, attempt at making a wrestling game with Hip-Hop playaz. *Fight for New York* has virtually nothing in common with it, opting to go down the ultra-violence route of broken glass, shady backstreet fighting venues and no-holds-barred extreme combat in a series of real-world environments. While *Def Jam Vendetta* had much in common with the light-hearted showmanship of the WWE circus, *Fight for New York* is like two blokes gouging each other's eyes out with their car keys at a bus stop.

Key to this new low-down dirtiness is the inclusion of five fighting styles for you to adapt and use — Mixed Martial Arts, Submission, Wrestling, Street Fighting and Kickboxing — all hoping to enhance the combat options, which, the makers hope, will give *Fight for New York* a grittier and more competitive edge. The weapons certainly will — beer bottles, bike chains, baseball bats and generic lumps of wood are all to hand in order to violate people with, in a game that's set to illustrate thuggish gangland fighting like nothing else.

The game's fighting arenas are now based around real-life locations, dumping *Vendetta*'s pseudo-wrestling rings for darker, more believable city venues like train stations and crumbling warehouses — locations that you can now smash to pieces, thanks to the inclusion of destructible scenery.

Gameplay has also been completely reworked. The whole wrestling angle has been pretty much dumped to accommodate the new era of ultra-violence, with players no longer trying to pin down opponents to win in a wrestling fashion — this time you're out to grind down and beat enemies once only, in your more usual fighting game manner. Now this new *Def Jam* is all about fighting hard and fast, grabbing weapons and mutilating the hell out of your Hip-Hop enemies.

The arenas now affect how you play, too. A whole new — and very welcome — range of game types have been added, many of which sound superb. The Inferno match has you fighting inside a circle of flames, with the loser being the first to get booted into the fire and set alight. Subway train fights now end by losers getting smashed out of the carriage, onto the tracks and crushed by an oncoming train — and there are many more of these innovative match types to look forward to. It all certainly sounds a lot more interesting than the usual list of match types found in the more traditional wrestling and fighting games of this type.

PAPA WAS A PUBLIC ENEMY

Over 35 Hip-Hop legends young, old, dead and incarcerated are included. New stars like Jamaican dancehall idiot Sean Paul are in here, but it's the big names of old that are the real sellers. Flavor Flav from the legendary Public Enemy is represented, as is Ice T, but the Main Man as far as *Fight for New York* is concerned is Snoop Dogg. Taking on the role of bad boss-guy Crow, the game's all about your personal battle >



DEF JAM: FIGHT FOR NEW YORK **FACT!**

> BIGGER

The makers claim the game's three times the size of *Def Jam Vendetta*, with over 90 fights to win.

> BRIGHTER

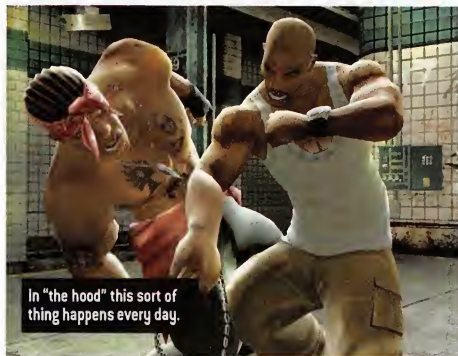
Thousands of items of branded clothing and jewellery are promised, for use in the create-a-character section.

> FAN INTERVENTION

There are 22 fight arenas planned, and the watching crowd will be able to join in and stick the boot in on your behalf.

> MORE

You'll also get to see Fat Joe, Freeway, Ghostface, Joe Budden, Kimora Lee Simmons and Slick Rick.



In "the hood" this sort of thing happens every day.



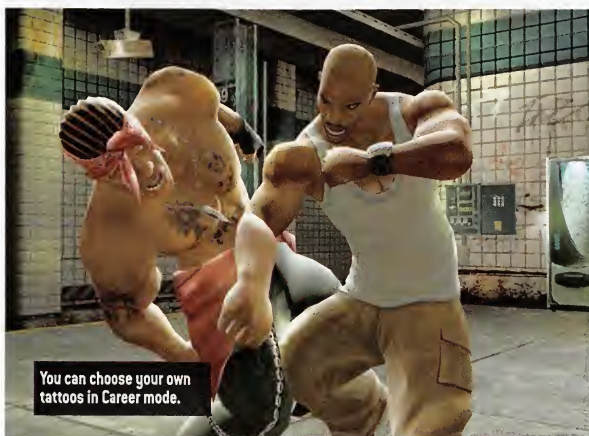
A couple of our "home boys" getting down to it.



The battle for "respect" is on. Come on, Nigel! Hit him!



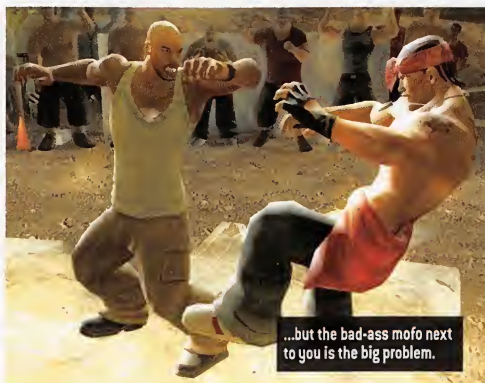
Check out the jewellery. It swings both ways.



You can choose your own tattoos in Career mode.



Crowd members attack you if you get too close...



...but the bad-ass mofo next to you is the big problem.

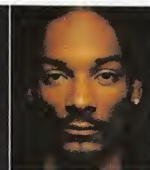
WHO'S IN IT... **FEATURING... JEAN PAUL!**

...and why? These are the big name stars of new *Def Jam*.

SNOOP DOGG

WHO?

Spiffed-out rapper who brought his own brand of laid-back, West Coast rap to the world, and also, less famously, had a fight with Emu on *The Word*.



WHY'S HE IN THE GAME?

Because he's the Snoop D-O-Double-Gizzle, that's why. I mean, really...

CARMEN ELECTRA

WHO?

Busty ex-*Baywatch* babe, who recently went all Hollywood on us by securing bit parts in *Scary Movie*, *Starsky & Hutch* and many more.



WHY'S SHE IN THE GAME?

Because of her really big tits and pert bottom. What more reason does she need?

SEAN PAUL

WHO?

Abysmal dancehall shouter who lucked into success by riding on the coat tails of people that can carry tunes. Opinionated? Us?



WHY'S HE IN THE GAME?

Because the rules of life currently state that Sean Paul must be in everything. Even games.

LIL' KIM

WHO?

Dirty Afro-American pixie who raps in a very dirty way about all things dirty. Asking men in jail to masturbate over her photo was a lyrical high point.



WHY'S SHE IN THE GAME?

Because the guys in the development team really wanted to motion capture her.

THE ENGLISHMAN'S GUIDE TO HIP-HOP SPEAK

Confused by American yooof and the strange things they say? Then let PSW be your guide!



"BLING"

MEANS: Accumulation of money leading to an obvious display of wealth.

EXAMPLE: "That new Casio calculator watch of yours is awfully BLING, Simon."

"BLUNTS"

MEANS: Hollow cigars used to hold and smoke certain types of illegal tobacco with.

EXAMPLE: "Marjorie, did you remember to pick up those BLUNTS from the 7/11?"

"BITCHES"

MEANS: All women, apart from your mum and any sisters you may have.

EXAMPLE: "Wow, Steve! Check out the hot BITCHES sitting on that park bench!"

"NINE"

MEANS: A gun, specifically one with a 9mm calibre.

EXAMPLE: "Tell the butler that if my gin & tonic isn't here pronto I'll use my NINE on him – and his BITCHES."

"AXE"

MEANS: A way of inquiring about something.

EXAMPLE: "I AXED her if she wanted to come and watch the cricket, but she had made prior arrangements."

"CLOCK"

MEANS: To look at. To notice.

EXAMPLE: "The policeman has CLOCKED us, Nigel. We really should put the traffic cone back where we found it and head back to the dorm."

Would you like to know more? If so, check out *Hip Hoptionary: The Dictionary of Hip Hop Terminology*, a book that explains how to talk like an American teen even if you're actually a retiree from Gosford. Available at all good bookstores.



Wrestling play dumped in favour of head-kicking fun.



Even tough hip hop stars wilt under groin pressure.

"FIGHT FOR NEW YORK ISN'T JUST A ROTA CHANGE OF HIP-HOP STARS IN THIS SEASON'S COLOURS – IT'S A WHOLE NEW GAME."



The Subway level has moving trains – so stay off the tracks.

to rise through the ranks of fighters, trying to earn the respect of seasoned warriors and gang leaders like Mr Dogg.

You've also got appearances from other popular artists that youths may recognise, with Ludacris, Method Man, Red Man and – woo hoo! – Busta Rhymes all in here. Some are bit-part players, others fully playable characters, a few crucial to the story – like Busta, who, among other things, stars in a bizarre mini-game that challenges you to smash up his car against the clock. Many of them have recorded their voices for use in the story scenes, too, for yet more Hip-Hip authenticity. Lil' Kim and Carmen Electra are also included as token Hip-Hop honeys to perv over – only this time you fight to impress them instead of having them fighting over you. Plus there are another 40-odd non-celebrity characters to help get across the game's story of gangland machinations and turf battles.

JACKANORY

It's all about the story this time. You're a young, upcoming gang-banger, fighting to gain the respect of the New York underground scene and, more importantly, your "crew". There's a lot of customisation involved, too. In a *Need for Speed* style, players are encouraged to lovingly craft their own Hip-Hop brawler to steer through the game, then upgrade him by buying tattoos, new clothes and unlocking more powerful techniques.

You'll also notice how much better it all looks. Gone are the lumpen, misshaped stars of *Vendetta*, replaced by chunky, stylised and over-the-top interpretations of the stars of the rapping world. Faces contort in anger, walls crumble, weapons hurt faces in a very believable manner. Jewellery glistens, your fighter gets cut and bruises appearing on his soon-to-be-broken body as he fights, members of the watching crowd join in and kick you down should you get too close, and the whole thing's sounding much more like the sort of dirty, dark and exciting fight game that a Def Jam product should be. *Fight for New York* will be blinging its way to PS2 this September, where it should compliment the more family-oriented *WWE* offering very well.

FIRST OPINION

Not only does it look good, but *Fight for New York* also offers many new ideas that sound very tempting indeed. The new match types look set to inject some excitement into the oft-bland list of wrestling game modes, with the move towards a darker fighting style can only win the series yet more fans.

/ GARY CUTLACK

WHAT THE MAKERS SAY

"FEATURES AN ALL-NEW FIGHTING ENGINE ALLOWING GAMERS TO CUSTOMIZE MULTIPLE FIGHTING STYLES AS THE DEEP NEW STORY MODE TAKES THE ACTION WELL BEYOND THE RING AND INTO THE STREETS."

Maintain the sting in the Hornet's tail.



Travelling flat out at Mach 1.8, the F/A-18 Hornet can fly from Sydney to Melbourne in 18 minutes.

18 minutes

F/A-18 Hornet Specifications

Engines	F404-GE-400 turbofans, 7,258kg thrust
Range	3,335km
Ceiling	Above 50,000 feet
Speed	Mach 1.8 (2,200km/h)

Start on \$23,000p.a. and earn over \$43,000p.a. after 18 months.

APPRENTICESHIP SPECIFICATIONS

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

GUARANTEED JOB

GREAT PAY

UNMATCHED BENEFITS

NO PRIOR EXPERIENCE

PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES

TEAM ENVIRONMENT

AIR FORCE TRADES

Aircraft Life Support Fitter

Aircraft Structural Fitter

Aircraft Technician

Avionic Technician

* Communication Electronic Technician

* Ground Support Equipment Fitter

*Qualified applicants may apply.

No one can offer you the sort of training and career prospects that you'll get from the Air Force.

Some trade apprenticeships are unique, and those in the Air Force are no exception. Where else could you be working on a \$50 million jet fighter from the moment you complete your training. Air Force Trade Apprenticeships will provide you with the best trade qualifications possible. Not only that, you'll gain unique skills and experience that are nationally recognised and highly sought after in the civilian world.



You'll be paid a great wage while you train with a guaranteed job when you finish. Starting on \$23,000p.a., you'll earn over \$43,000p.a. after 18 months.



You'll enjoy all sorts of benefits like free medical and dental, subsidised meals and accommodation.



AIR FORCE
TRADE APPRENTICESHIPS

You'll receive fantastic opportunities to further your training and advance your career. You may get the opportunity to travel throughout Australia and possibly overseas on deployment.

10



GUARANTEE

You'll receive nationally accredited TAFE equivalent qualifications and the guarantee of a job at the completion of your training.



Whilst you'll be busy doing your apprenticeship, there's always plenty of time for play.



Call 13 19 01 or visit www.defencejobs.gov.au



> SUB-ZERO

"And for my next trick I shall tear out your still-beating heart with my bare hands."



"FATALITY MOVES ARE MORE SPECTACULAR AND BLOODIER THAN EVER."

MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION

Four games in one, and that includes chess. Has *Mortal Kombat* gone soft, or is it still the big bruiser we all know and love?

> GENRE	FIGHTING
> DEVELOPER	MIDWAY
> PUBLISHER	MIDWAY
> OUT	OCTOBER
> ONLINE	YES

YES, THE RUMOURS ARE ALL TRUE. CHESS

and *Tetris* do indeed feature as mini-games in *Mortal Kombat: Deception*. But don't worry, the game hasn't gone soft – you can still decapitate your enemies, rip out their still-beating hearts or tear strips of flesh from the broken bones.

In addition to the usual feast of guts and gore, every character now boasts multiple gruesome fatality moves. Also new are strategically placed death traps that opponents can be knocked onto. So far we've seen rotating spikes, spinning gears, a molten metal stamp, a furnace and an avalanche of boulders that deal in the universal currency of grisly death. Aside from looking good in action, these death traps make the levels more interactive, adding an extra tactical element to the on-screen carnage.

Of the 24 characters, it's rumoured that 16 are returning faves and eight are new. Fighters confirmed so far are Ashrah, Baraka, Bo Rai Cho, Dairou, Ermac, Hotaro, Jax, Kabal, Kenshi, Li Mei, Mileena, Nightwolf, Noob, Scorpion, Sindel, Smoke and Sub-Zero. There'll also be a demon-hunting female clad in white, a new member of the Black Dragon clan and a samurai.

CHOOSE YOUR DESTINY

Nearly all of the moves from *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance* are back, albeit with some small style changes. The most contentious is the return of the uppercut, which some gamers argue was too powerful in previous versions. True, it's possible to send an opponent airborne and then work in a combo to juggle him, but on the flip side it's now been made easier to break free from a combo. There's nothing worse than sitting there helplessly on the receiving end of a magic 50-hit combo.

Specific moves include Baraka's dual-blade lunge attack, Ermac's teleport slam and the return of Scorpion's teleport punch. He also has a levitation move from which you can either execute a dive kick or slam into the floor. Elsewhere, Nightwolf can shoulder-charge opponents and fire energy arrows that stick in an opponent, and Hotaro fires a projectile into the ground at an opponent's feet that sends the fighter hurtling towards him.

The fatality moves are even more spectacular and bloodier than ever. Sub-Zero tears an opponent's head off along with his spine as usual, but now freezes his victim and shatters the body by lobbing the head at it. An unmasked Mileena bites an opponent's head clean off. Hotaro slams his victim onto the floor repeatedly until they literally fall apart. Bo Rai Cho holds up a torch to his mouth and blows the flames towards his opponent's head. Ermac levitates his victim and then brings him or her down with body-shattering force to the floor. Scorpion rips his opponent's arms off and then beats the poor bastard to death with them. Committing a suicide fatality suddenly doesn't sound so cowardly.

FIRST OPINIONS

The basic fighting system hasn't really been altered, yet the game feels different to *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*. Much of this is down to the improved arenas that give you plenty to think about in addition to what your opponent is doing. And taking into account all the extra modes, this looks like real value for money.

/ JONATHAN TODD



MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION **FACT!**

> FINISH HIM!

Red, blue and yellow warnings below each character's health bar indicate when they're open to attack.

> SHUT YOUR TRAP

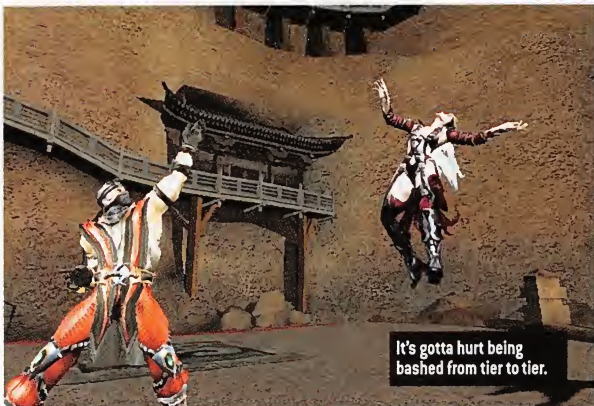
There's also a light indicator that appears whenever your fighter is dangerously close to a death trap.

> NAME DROPPING

Confirmed level names include The Red Dragon Temple, The Slaughterhouse, Hell's Foundry and The Beetle.

> PIT YOUR WITS

Chess Kombat and Puzzle Kombat are playable online, but Konquest Adventure sadly is not.



It's gotta hurt being bashed from tier to tier.



The prisoner in the background will hold him for you.



Send your opponent flying into a death trap.



Bloodier and more violent than ever. Get in.

"DEATH TRAPS ADD AN EXTRA TACTICAL ELEMENT TO THE ON-SCREEN CARNAGE."



Levels are better looking and more interactive.

OUTSTANDING!

There's more to *Mortal Kombat: Deception* than cracking skulls.



CHESS KOMBAT

Pieces are divided into five classes, and the rules have been simplified somewhat. Watch out for power-ups hidden on some



KONQUEST ADVENTURE

Greater freedom to roam and even bigger than before. Explore six different realms and three fighting styles of your choosing.



PUZZLE KOMBAT

Mini characters fight at the bottom of the screen. The outcome depends on your success at keeping the falling blocks in check.



No one stands a chance against that spiked ball.



> **Psychic Soccer**

"Watch in awe as I levitate this soccer ball using only the power of my mystic mind!"

"EVERYTHING THAT'S GREAT ABOUT SOCCER CONDENSED ONTO A DVD"

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

We once saw a documentary where a Japanese teenager did nothing but stay in his room alone and play *Pro Evo* all day. Lucky bastard.

> GENRE	PRO EVO!
> DEVELOPER	KCET
> PUBLISHER	KONAMI
> OUT	NOVEMBER
> ONLINE	TBC

THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT *PRO EVOLUTION Soccer* is the premier sports franchise on the PS2. *FIFA* and the other EA mainstays may sell in superior numbers, but nothing beats Konami's titles in terms of pure gameplay excellence. They are the perfect digital manifestations of the world's most beautiful sport – taking everything that's great about soccer and condensing it all into the space of a single DVD. Indeed, so good are these games that there was once a period when *PSW* almost fell behind schedule simply because its editorial staff would elect to play *Pro Evo* instead of working to get the magazine out the door. That's all behind us now, but it won't be for long. *Pro Evolution Soccer 4* is coming.

BUGGER IT LIKE BECKHAM

Predictably, Konami has promised to bring a variety of new game mechanics to the table for this iteration of *PES* and all of them are strongly focused on strengthening the realism for which the series is famous. Aside from the addition of new stats that govern attributes such as a player's ability to control high balls and successfully pull off first-time shots, developer KCET have also introduced more variation into the appearance and animations of each individual on the pitch. Zidane will dextrously dance around the ball while dribbling, Heskey will flop and flounder about the box with ridiculous familiarity, and Beckham will bugger crucial penalty kicks with all the flair and style we're now accustomed to. Sadly, no mention has been made of whether or not players will also come replete with their own personal sex scandals, but we can only live in hope.

On the more mechanical side of things, dribbling and passing have been tweaked significantly, giving players more control as they go one-on-one and attempt to pass a lone defender guarding the box. This is actually quite interesting to us because one of the few qualms we had with *Pro Evo 3* was that the manual dribble control assigned to the right thumbstick was absolute bollocks and almost completely useless unless you happened to be some kind of *PES* superchamp like Jackson Gothe-Snape. Hopefully KCET will get rid of it and reintroduce the analogue passing system that we loved so much in *Pro Evo 2*. Or, you know, they could just get rid of the stupid bloody handball rule that never works properly and always seems to go in the computer's favour. We'd be happy with that too.

Perhaps the most interesting new feature is the addition of an on-field referee who will run up and down the pitch while monitoring play and will even step in to calm down unruly players following particularly harsh tackles. We're told that the referee and other officials will also sport improved AI and will play the advantage more often on minor infringements. Huzzah!

Game modes have also been tweaked, with the fan-favourite Master League mode undergoing a number of significant changes. There isn't enough room to go into them all at the moment, but rest assured we'll keep you updated in future issues of *PSW*. Stay tuned.

FIRST OPINIONS

No mention of whether the more annoying features from *PES 3* will be dropped, but even if they aren't *Pro Evolution Soccer 4* still be the best soccer game ever invented. Really. It will be.
/ DANIEL STAINES



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4 **FACT!**

> NO MORE ORANGES

Following the trend set by its predecessor, *Pro Evo 4* will feature more licensed clubs and players.

> STAT ATTACK

Sources tell us that player stats in Master League change and degrade over time for extra realism.

> BEST OF THE BEST

A new "My Best Eleven" feature will allow gamers to save their favourite team lineups for posterity. Nice.

> YOU DIRTY KIT

Player kits get dirtier as the match wears on and can become completely filthy during mud-soaked rainy play.



Oh! That's quite enough of that, thank you! Give the bugger a card, ref!



Scoring a goal off the volley is always a glorious moment.

"DRIBBLING AND PASSING HAVE BEEN TWEAKED, GIVING PLAYERS MORE CONTROL"



The Swedes are rarely this showy in real life.



The new dribbling system sounds promising indeed.



As Peter Brackley might say: "That's a fantastic header!"



Wonder if there'll be a special "poor sportsman" stat for the Italian team?



What a dive! You'd think he was playing for France!

Grand Theft Auto San Andreas™

> GENRE	GTA
> DEVELOPER	ROCKSTAR
> PUBLISHER	ROCKSTAR
> OUT	OCTOBER
> ONLINE	NO

IF YOU'RE THE KIND OF GAMER I THINK YOU ARE, THEN YOU probably already know all there is to know about the new *GTA* game. You've read the websites, bought the magazines, downloaded the wallpapers and posted on the messageboards. You've speculated, ruminated and... erm.... gesticulated. You've done everything any self-respecting PS2 gamer would do. But there's probably one thing you *haven't* done and that's seen the game in action. Well I have. And now I'm going to tell you just what I think of it. Direct from the offices of Rockstar London, we give you the *PSW* perspective on *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*. Let's rock this biznatch.

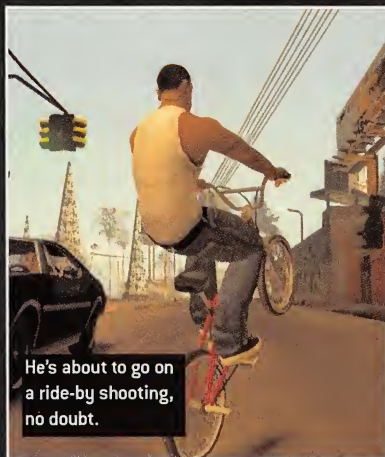
SEPARATED AT BIRTH?



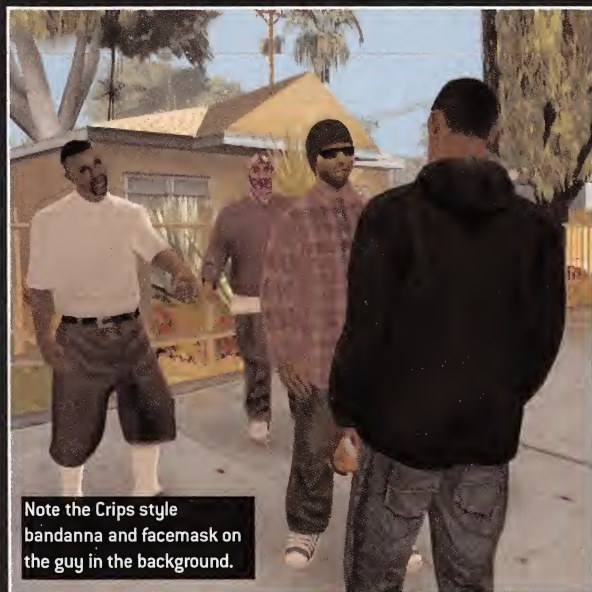
NWA founder Eric "Eazy-E" Wright



...and "Ryder" from San Andreas.



He's about to go on a ride-by shooting, no doubt.



Note the Crips style bandanna and facemask on the guy in the background.



"Race you to the crackhouse! Last one there's a rotten egg!"

IT'S BIG

San Andreas is an entire fictional state based loosely on California and Nevada. It sports three major cities separated by miles of countryside, interstate freeways, deserts and west coast shoreline. The city I saw – a stylish re-conceptualisation of Los Angeles named Los Santos – is itself approximately the size of Vice City in its entirety while the entire state of San Andreas is roughly five times larger than that. It's pretty goddamn big. Of course, I didn't get to see anything outside of Los Santos, so I can't tell you firsthand how expansive the gameworld is or what you can expect to do on the long trips between the three major cities. For all I know, the rest of San Andreas may well be a vast wasteland populated only by ravenous wolves and laser shooting dinosaurs. But the game is definitely quite big... regardless of what it actually contains. The dual-layered DVD they're using to contain all the data is definitely a testament to that.

But – and this is the five million dollar question – is bigger necessarily better? To me, *GTA 3* and *Vice City* were masterfully proportioned. They managed to invoke a sense of wonder at their sheer size without ever being large enough to

be imposing or confusing. Given that *San Andreas* is going to be larger than both of these games combined, I can't help but wonder just how big is too big when it comes to games of this type. After all, there are only so many street names, shortcuts, weapons stashes and Pay 'n' Spray locations we can remember at any one time. Just how far can you stretch the patented *GTA* gameplay without ripping it at the seams?

GANGSTA, GANGSTA

San Andreas is set in the early 90s – around '94 I'm told – and aims to reflect the myriad of cultural traits that characterised California during this period. During the demo, Rockstar were keen to emphasise that this entails more than the gangsta culture that a lot of us have come to associate with the game up till now. Yes, there will be gangbanging in *San Andreas* – but there's also going to be so much more than that. I wouldn't know what that "more" will consist of because I was only shown the parts of the game that actually are all about gangbanging... you know, right after I was shown a video montage of "thematic influences" that was also all about gangbanging. Oh, and the box. Have you seen the box? There's a lot of gangbanging imagery there. But no – *San Andreas* is definitely not about gangbanging. I'm assured of that.

"So, okay, that's a cheeseburger, fries and a shake for you; and you wanted a Big Mac and Coke, right?"



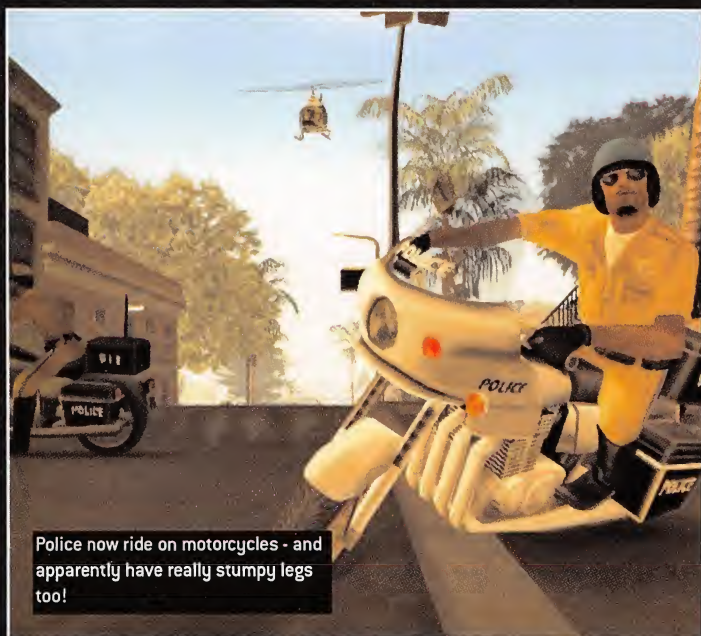


An accurate depiction of Los Angeles traffic if I ever saw one...

EAT THIS

One of the most interesting aspects of *San Andreas* is the extent to which players are able to alter the appearance of the protagonist, CJ. Eating plays a pivotal part of the game and directly affects CJ's physical stature and prowess. Eat too much or too poorly and your man will end up fatter than your fat ass momma; fail to eat regularly and CJ will become weedier than a sack full of chronic in Snoop Dogg's pocket. This means that regular dining will be a necessity for players hoping to stay on top of their game and – to be perfectly honest – I'm not exactly enthused about that. Having to eat is a mundane necessity all of us are faced with every day of our lives and there's simply no need to replicate that in a *GTA* game. After all, a more 'realistic' experience isn't always going to be a more enjoyable one.

Having said that, though, it's worth noting at this point that the other 'lifestyle' aspects of *San Andreas* are actually quite fun – particularly the haircuts. There's just something innately appealing about seeing CJ emerge out of a barbershop with a brand new 90s style flattop... even if his fellow gang members quickly take the piss out of him for it as they did in the demo I saw. Unfortunately, I don't know anything about what sort of clothes you'll be able to buy, so all I can really say on that front is that CJ's default attire looks crap. Personally, I'm hoping that there'll be some big gold chains, chunky rings, diamond dental implants and other phat bling-bling to spruce him up with later in the game. Oh, and a pimp suit would be good too. You can't go wrong with a purple fur coat.



Police now ride on motorcycles - and apparently have really stumpy legs too!



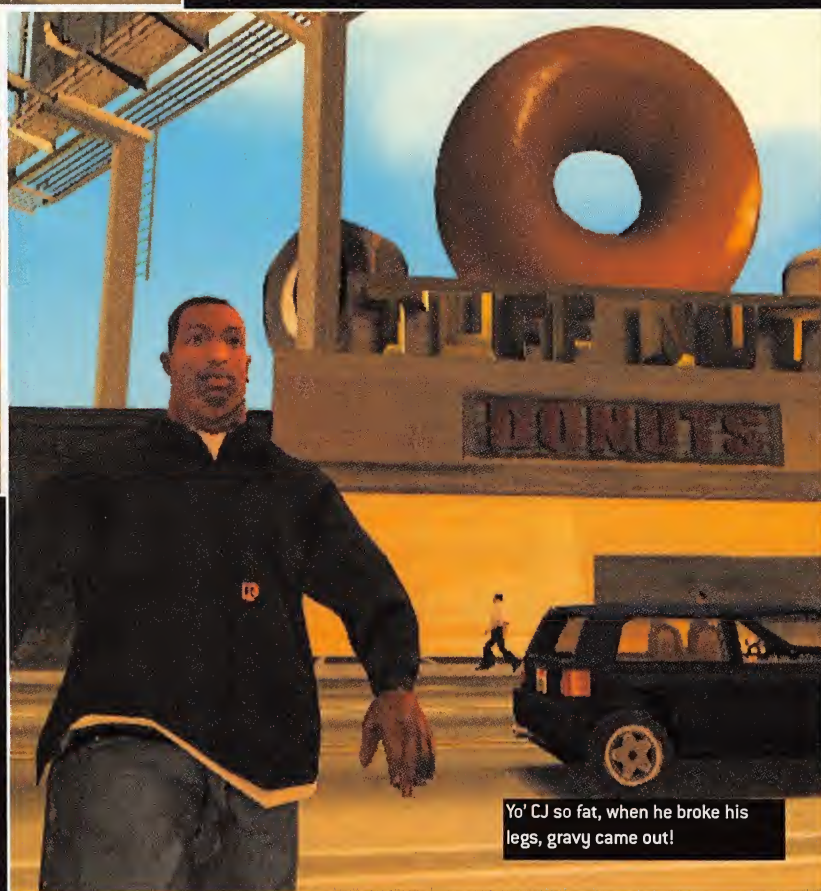
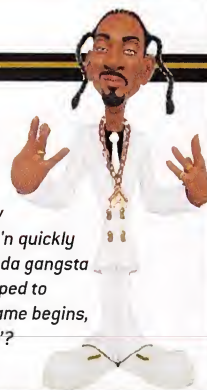
Reece the barber is the man to come to for stylish cuts and quiffs. Go the blonde afro, dude!

THE STORY SO FAR TO SHIZZLE

Because you probably already know everything there is to know about *San Andreas*' plot (which you will recall is totally not about gangbanging), I thought I'd spice up a typically boring story synopsis box by running it through a wonderful internet application called Tha Shizzolator. What does Tha Shizzolator do, you ask? Why, it shizzles up spizeach in the stizyle of Snoop D-O-Double-G. Observe:

Yo' ass play a young mutha named Carl "CJ" Johnson. Prior to da start of da game, CJ had been living in Liberty City fo' five years — supposedly to escape da seedy life of Los Santos, but really because tha dude wuz trying to avoid dealing wit da death of tha dude's ten year old brother 'n shit. His peaceful existence in Liberty is interrupted, however, when tha dude's brother calls to inform tha dude's ass of da death of tha

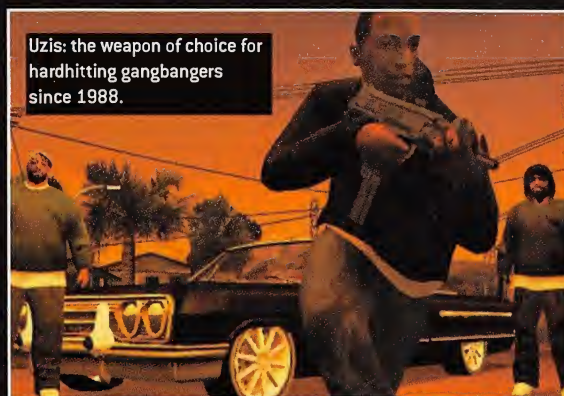
dude's mother. Returning to Los Santos to be wit tha dude's family, CJ hooks up wit da crew tha dude left behind 'n quickly becomes drawn into da gangsta lifestyle tha dude hoped to escape. And so da game begins, know what I'm sayin'?



Yo' CJ so fat, when he broke his legs, gravy came out!



A four-person drive-by in action.



Uzis: the weapon of choice for hardhitting gangbangers since 1988.

THUG LIFE

I saw three different missions played out during my time with *San Andreas*: Menace, Drive-By and Reuniting the Families. The first is essentially a warm-up mission that requires CJ and Ryder to visit a local pizza joint and 'convince' the owner to adopt a friendlier disposition toward their gang. This goes astray however as the boys discover that said restaurateur is actually packing heat under the counter and isn't afraid to pop a few caps when things turn nasty. CJ and Ryder flee and that's pretty much the end of the mission — nothing particularly interesting.

As you may have guessed from the name, 'Drive-By' sees CJ as the wheelman for a four-person drive-by shooting on a group of rival gang members. Those of you who have played *GTA 3* and *Vice City* will know that trying to drive and shoot at the same time in those games was an absolute nightmare, so I was very pleased to note that the new system featured in *San Andreas* — whereby the AI does the shooting for you — works quite well and makes pulling a successful drive-

by on someone a breeze by comparison.

Reuniting the Families' was by far the most entertaining mission I saw. The basic gist is that you're called upon to facilitate a meeting of the big gangs at a local hotel when SWAT police suddenly burst on the scene and try to break up the party. Your goal is to shoot your way out of the complex, find a way back to your car and get the hell out of there before the fuzz hails your ass to jail. The most interesting aspect of this mission is that it clearly demonstrated the new targeting system, which seems to be very similar to the ones featured in *Red Dead Revolver* and *Manhunt*. Basically, there's an over-the-shoulder targeting reticle and you simply point that at what you want to shoot and press the button — comfortable, intuitive and a far easier to use than the targeting systems in *GTA 3* and *Vice City*. Thank god for that.

I liked what I saw of the missions in *San Andreas*. Although they were all quite similar in nature, each demonstrated that the freeform gameplay responsible

for making the GTA franchise so popular is still intact and as strong as ever. I asked if there would be more freedom in regard to choosing which missions to take and who to work for, but was promptly given an indefinite and rather useless response that seemed to suggest that mission structure will essentially be the same as that featured in the previous two games. Oh well, if it ain't broke...

LAST WERDZ

Despite the concerns voiced in this preview, there's no denying that *San Andreas* looks like it's going to be incredibly good fun. I found myself unconsciously arranging my fingers into a West Side gangsta sign while watching it in action and that definitely says something about the level of immersion on offer here. What are the other cities like? I don't know because I didn't see them. But you can bet your chrome plated nine-millimetre that *PSW* will be there as soon as any more information comes to hand. Peace out, blood.

/DANIEL STAINES

V8 SUPER



RCARS 2



What happens when you mix every type of driving together in one pot? The world's most comprehensive racer, that's what. Welcome to the *V8 SUPERCARS 2* start grid.

> GENRE	RACING
> DEVELOPER	CODEMASTERS
> PUBLISHER	CODEMASTERS
> OUT	NOVEMBER
> ONLINE	YES



THE V8 SUPERCARS SERIES HAS BEEN A KIND OF UNASSUMING, EVER-CAPABLE butler, always answering the needs of the more discerning members of the racing community. But *V8 Supercars 2* is where the butler dons a pair of wrap-around Ray-Bans, lime green lycra shorts and starts doing the Lambada on your ancestral table. Because this time, it's all about the bells and the whistles. *V8 Supercars 2* even calls itself "*The Ultimate Racing Simulator*", just so you know exactly what it's trying to do.

The concept behind *Supercars 2* is simple. Take fifteen different types of car racing and put them all in a game together. There you go. Any worries about quantity taking precedent over quality go straight out the window when you realise that the *V8 Supercars* brand is lord high duke of racing >



realism. Every car you race is just like the real thing, down to the last nuance of handling. It's hardly a unique claim for a driving game these days, but the *Supercars* people believe they've nailed it in a way that will make other titles look as gritty and convincing as *Micro Machines*. We're not talking *Gran Turismo 4* levels of authenticity here – *Supercars 2* aims to do better, setting the standard for others to follow. Not the other way round.

JUST MY TYPE

So, what exactly are these numerous and oh-so-clever types of racing on offer in *Supercars 2* then? Well, at the most basic level the racing is split into 15 main categories: Supercar, 4x4, Open Wheel, Truck, Supertruck, Vintage, GT, V8, Formula Ford, Hotrod, Stock Car, DTM, Ice Racing, Convertible and Rally. This comprehensive list accommodates pretty much all the driving styles you could ever think of – bar Off-Road Go-Karting –

from circuit racing in American muscle cars to throwing a 4WD rally car around a dusty track in the middle of nowhere. We're especially impressed with the quirky classes on offer. Like the Formula Ford racers – the spidery younger cousins of F1 cars. And the carefully chosen selection of vintage models. Or insanely speedy GT racers. Or fat, be-finned, souped-up 1950s hotrods. Oh, and supertrucks. Big massive hearty, heavy unstoppable trucks to wrench round bends like you're taming some kind of giant bull. There's even ice racing. Ice racing, people! Cars on the ice, with the skidding and the spraying and the pretending to be James Bond!

Okay, we'll calm down a bit. The point isn't just that there's a whopping great a la carte driving menu with fifteen types of racing to choose from. It's that these fifteen types of racing are all faithfully recreated and well done. We've played *Supercars 2* a lot, and no matter what car or track combination we opt for, the same amount of detail and attention is apparent, so no matter how outlandish your choice of vehicle, you always

A LA MODE

Here's our pick of the most exciting driving modes in *Supercars 2*. Some of them are, how can we put this, a bit unusual like...



FORMULA FORD

Driving these odd, delicate little cars is a bit like being in a mechanical spider race. You get to try them out right at the start of the game, but that doesn't mean that they're easy to steer.



OPEN WHEEL

Or, as we call it, "Loads of Formula One type cars all rushing round the track so fast, sometimes the very light itself can't keep up." Speed freaks will get their kicks here.



VINTAGE

Aw, bless. There's only a handful of oldsters to drive around, but each one is so lovingly recreated you'll weep crystal tears into the walnut dashboard when you're behind the wheel.



TRUCKS

We like trucks. Trucks make us feel all beardy and swarthy and manly. As for the supertrucks, well they make us feel like we're racing the Nashville Demons of Dirt. In a vest. Woo yeah!

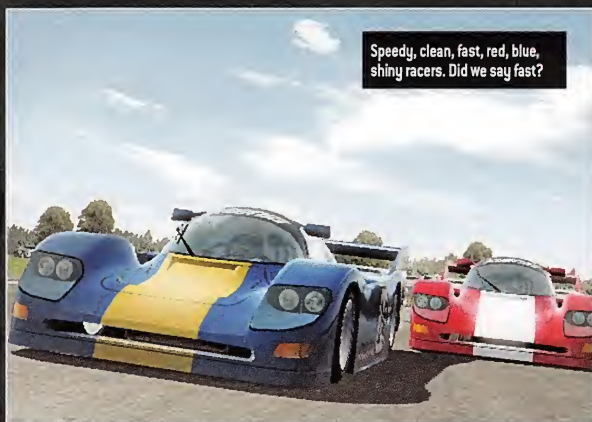


ICE RACING

As if driving around normal tracks wasn't tough enough, the Ice Racing mode gives you the sort of out-of-control thrills you normally only get from riding drunken camels. One-handed.



Giving the likes of GT4 a good run for its money looks wise.



Speedy, clean, fast, red, blue, shiny racers. Did we say fast?

feel you're competing in a proper race, rather than a tacky add-on to a more standard racing game. Which is why we like it, essentially.

The one thing *Supercars* isn't going for is an insane number of different cars. It looks like there'll be about 35 vehicles in the game, meaning you'll be competing against the same model of car in most races. But then, *Supercars 2* is more about the actual racing than it is the cars. Rather than pack in all the crappy hatchbacks and family saloons out there, the cars are all massive professional models that really mean business. The upcoming *Gran Turismo 4* will cater for car porn aficionados anyway, so we're not at all concerned. More importantly, *Supercars 2* manages to break the golden rule of licensed driving games by having real-life cars that can be smashed up.

HEY, GOOD LOOKIN'

The first thing you'll notice about *Supercars 2*, whatever race you play, is that the cars look real. Not *Gran Turismo* shiny-shiny hyper real. Not *Need for Speed Underground* neon bling real either. Just real. You know, like the cars outside your window right now. Not fake, in other words. It's the same with the tracks. Thanks to some extra capable programming from



Ooh, that's posh. That's the car the King of Earth would drive.

"Supercars is the lord high duke of racing realism."



"Last one to the motor show eats a dirty sparkplug!"

Codemasters' eggheads (and that's as technical as we're going to get) the 50 tracks look pleasingly authentic without being needlessly eye-popping. The point is, during a race you're not admiring the sheen on the bonnet, or checking out the excellent engine sounds. You're simply racing, the wind flowing through your metaphorical hair as bugs splat into your allegorical teeth. It's the kind of balls-out realism rally games have been turning out for a while now, but applied to the world of high-speed racing. So pack your best rallying trousers with you when you come to *Supercars 2*, because you'll be needing the kind of flat out, split-second control that you've had to perfect on games like *Colin McRae Rally 04*.

You can see the emphasis on the purest of pure racing everywhere >





else in the game. The last *Supercars* game on PlayStation2 was rather overly proud of its rags to riches storyline, told in the movies between races. It's a concept that's been copied in some lesser games since then, but *Supercars 2* does things a little differently. Instead of a main character, you'll see everything from a driver's eye view. At the end of the race the camera literally lifts out of your car and follows your coach Irving round to your trailer. Irving's a hard-ass who's not afraid of giving you a piece of his mind if you mess up, but there are other pitside players who'll help you make more money or get in your way. It's all told in credibly realistic movie scenes, which are also kept mercifully short. Don't ask us why, but over-the-top soap opera style drama seems to go so well with a high-powered racing hijinks. It's odd.

However, the story isn't at the heart of the game. Codemasters is keen to stress that the sequences are only there to make the racing more vital and emotive. You'll meet new characters as you race, and rivals will even come and slag you off if you give them a hard time on the track, but that's it. It's more about giving you a glimpse behind the scenes of a race than

SHINY HAPPY MOTORS

Supercar 2's cars are some of the most detailed and authentic we've seen. Look.



Every car's been recreated with obsessive levels of detail – from the sponsor stickers through to the interior furnishings. And everything's in order under the hood, too.



Supercars 2 has no problems with keeping tabs on twenty individual cars at once, without losing smoothness or detail. They must've spent *ages* getting this to work.



Even the light that falls on your vehicle will change according to the shadows cast around the track. Did we mention the reflections? Ooh, reflections too! Gawrsh!



“The way the cars move is so realistic it's scary. And we do mean scary.”

anything else. Some might be sad about this; we reckon most will consider it a damn good thing though.

This extends to the radio commentary from Irving while you're driving. Occasionally he'll chip in with a barbed comment or a crusty compliment, but mostly you're left on your own to fend for yourself. In the Career mode, you'll have to beat rivals as well as place highly on the podium, but there's not much to get in the way of you and the race. The pyramid structure of the last *Supercars* game has been simplified as well. Now, you'll always have a choice of two races with two different car types throughout Career mode, but there's really only one direction to go – straight to the top.





The game's been out on Xbox and PC for a few months now, but we should be rewarded for our patience. PS2 owners even get an extra track – Catalunya in Spain, to be precise – as a kind of sweetener. There's a satisfying sprinkling of other PS2-only additons to increase the flavour. You can save the impressive, near photorealistic replays onto a memory card to wow your friends with, for example. And the Pro Sim mode is an extra that's previously only appeared on the PC version of the game. It's there to give die-hard sim heads a chance to experience the dubious thrill of racing with absolutely every variable that can happen in real life. Anything that can go wrong, will, and controlling your vehicle is going to be rock hard. You'd have to be a concrete-headed car freak to truly enjoy it, but it's good that it's there for the sake of completion.

One of the few complaints raised by Xbox and PC owners of *Supercars 2* was that the game didn't let you loose on many unusual car/track combinations. So thanks to the added development time, we'll be able to play with a greater variety of cars on more of the tracks online than any other version of *Supercars* out there, which gives us a warm proud glow inside. And once you've honed your skills to a fine point, you'll be ready to go online against at least seven other human drivers. When we spoke to the people behind *Supercars 2* at Codemasters, they were attempting to squeeze ten or even twelve players into every online race. We can't guarantee this will make it into the finished version at the moment, but here's hoping.



BEST OF BRITISH

As befits a UK-made game, *V8 Supercars 2* has some sterling British classics to drive. God bless the Mother Country!



James Bond drove this one in *Goldfinger*. That makes it approximately ten thousand times cooler than the super robot future flying cars of 1,000,000AD. Not bad.



So new they haven't even taken the wrapping off yet. The DB9 is the car equivalent of pink champagne and caviar omelettes served to you by a naked Natalie Portman.



The Vanquish V12 makes the other cars in this panel look like they live in a caravan in Redfern, eating spaghetti hoops out of the can. Officially the Loveliest Car Ever.



Austin Powers drove this one in *The Spy Who Shagged Me*. Okay, so it's not quite as cool as the DB7 in *Goldfinger*. Never mind, the E-Type is still a four-wheeled masterpiece we'd happily kill for.



Not just the most expensive of this little lot, it can go from 0 to 200mph in the time it takes you to say "Fetch me my goggles, Jeeves!" In fact it's so fast... it's already gone. Blimey.



Normal cars read about this car in the car version of *Penthouse*. True.



A front end that's good for a) speed and b) bisecting folk.



We've got one of these in the garage. Somewhere. Honest.

"We're looking at nothing less than the Swiss Army Knife of racing titles."

FEELS SO REAL

Supercars 2 is aiming to be the absolute don of realistic driving sims, and more time has been spent tweaking the way everything moves than anything else. The physics – the way the cars act on the track – is so realistic it's scary. And we really do mean scary. Accelerate too fast into a turn and, instead of the usual video game slickness, you'll find you've spun your vehicle out onto the road. Nudge another car and you're as likely to come off hurt as they are. It's not safe out there, we tell ya.

Beating the computer-controlled drivers is hardly a doddle now, as they won't just meekly follow the racing line round the track any more. Now if you shunt one of them out of the way, they won't just return to their old position. They'll adapt to your decisions, slowing down if you brake right behind them, or working out their own route around you. Fortunately they can arse up as well – on the Ice Racing levels, they'll frequently spin off and crash if they try stupid speeds. You can even watch the other cars jostle for position in front of you, just like in a real race. And there are specific personalities you'll need to watch out for, because it's as much

about beating rivals as it is about winning races.

Oh, and if you're thinking you can simply nudge other drivers round corners to slow yourself down, *Gran Turismo* style, think again. One of *Supercars 2*'s greatest strengths is that the damage is so realistic, it makes real-life damage on real-life cars look a bit half-hearted. Bash your motor too many times and it won't just start looking like someone's taken the world's biggest can-opener to it. It'll start to malfunction from the inside too. Gear trouble, steering problems and engine failure will all conspire to make your wreck worthless to drive. This isn't about limping across the finish line in a flaming shell, just getting onto the podium. That's just made-up video game stuff. It's about avoiding car-to-car contact at all costs, treating your precious machine like the automotive jewel it is and driving like you would in real life – bloody carefully.

If this all sounds a bit serious, and you've never played a *Supercars* game before, don't be alarmed. *Supercars*' demanding gameplay is still immensely accessible, once you've tamed your inner driving demon. We're very impressed with the look and feel of the new title, and we're expecting it to become something of a necessity for every dedicated petrolhead.

FIRST OPINIONS

With this many modes and racing types, plus a load of quietly gorgeous graphics, *Supercars 2* is setting itself up as some kind of mad interactive encyclopedia of racing. We're looking at nothing less than the Swiss Army Knife of racing titles.

/JOFF BROWN



More sexy advertising than an inner-city bus stop. Phwoar.

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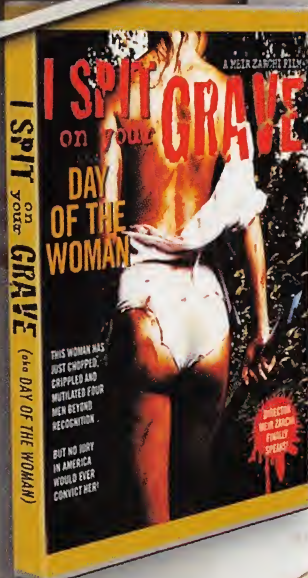


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REVIEWS

Attention! This section contains everything you need to decide what to buy, and what to leave well alone.



46 **DRIV3R**
Well, after months of anticipation, the r3v3r is finally here. Was it worth the wait? Turn to p.46 to find out.

PSW RATINGS

The PSW scoring system is designed to make your buying decisions simple. Here's how it works.

> 10/10	ESSENTIAL
> 9/10	BRILLIANT
> 8/10	RECOMMENDED
> 7/10	GREAT
> 6/10	DECENT
> 5/10	AVERAGE
> 4/10	POOR
> 3/10	VERY DISAPPOINTING
> 2/10	BLOODY RUBBISH
> 1/10	AVOID AT ALL COSTS

SOMETIMES THINGS JUST DON'T WORK OUT

the way you want them to. *Driv3r* didn't work out the way we wanted it to. We were expecting a really good game and instead we got a game that's... not so good. Turn to p.46 to find out why.

On the other, not so disappointing hand, *Shellshock: Nam '67* borders on the superb and here I personally thought it was going to be offensive and boring. Games are funny like that.

Elsewhere, rally champ Richard Burns is hoping to knock Colin McRae off his throne by releasing his very own rally racer. See how he gets on inside. Other sporting gems lurking inside include *World Championship Snooker 2004* and the dancemat-friendly *Athens 2004*. *MTV Music Generator 3* makes a brave attempt to trick you into thinking that mixing Ibiza anthems in your bedroom is easy, while super-addictive racer *Mashed* makes no excuse for demanding that a quartet of sweaty men take up residence in your bedroom for 18 hours. Returning to more familiar genres, three violent actioners round things off. There's strategic action aplenty in *Combat Elite: WWII Paratroopers*, awesome psychic fun in *Psi-Ops* and a whole heap of gaming pain in *Syphon Filter: The Omega Strain*. Words can't describe how bad this game is. Oh, wait, yes they can - it's utterly crap. There we go.

/ DANIEL STAINES



PSW GAME OF THE MONTH

The Game of the Month Award is what it is, the title that in PSW's opinion is the essential purchase of the month. Go and buy it. Now. Now!



PSW MUST BUY

Typically awarded to games that score 8/10 or above, representing one of the best in its genre. Simply, if you like this type of game, you 'must buy'. Clever eh?



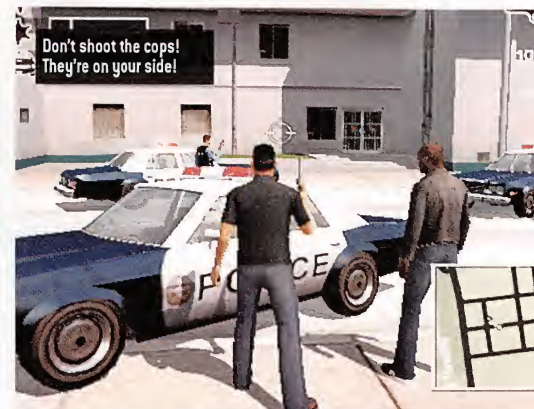
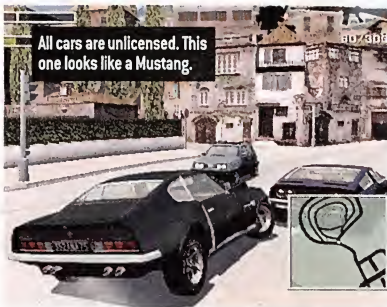
052 Shellshock: Nam '67



062 Mashed

NEW RELEASES

- 046 DRIV3R
- 052 SHELLSHOCK: NAM '67
- 058 RICHARD BURNS RALLY
- 062 MASHED
- 066 PSI-OPS
- 070 SPIDERMAN 2
- 076 SNOOKER
- 078 MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 3
- 080 ATHENS 2004
- 081 SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN
- 082 MINI REVIEWS
- 084 DVD REVIEWS



DRIV3R

There are rumours that some mags are being paid big money to say nice things about this game. *PSW* is obviously not one of those mags...



> TYPE	DRIVING
> PLAYERS	1
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	ATARI
> DEVELOPER	REFLECTIONS
> ONLINE	NO

"IF THERE'S ONE LINE THAT SUMS UP DRIVER, it's: the most accurate possible simulation of Hollywood and TV car chases." So mused Martin Edmundson, Managing Director of Reflections and Development Director of *Driv3r*, in an interview published in *PSW* #017 in December of 2003.

Now before we go into the history of Reflections and the *Driver* series and the protracted development period of *Driv3r* and the experiment that was *Stuntman* (Reflection's first PS2 'driving' game – a controversial offering that polarised players with its extreme difficulty level), we have to hand it to Reflections that *Driv3r* lives up to its mission statement and does produce some truly cinematic car chases for all to experience and enjoy. Indeed, if it were to be judged on this criteria and on this criteria alone, then *Driv3r* could be deemed an absolute success, without hesitation. But the trouble is that simulations don't necessarily make for fun games and in *Driv3r*'s case, pretty much all other game elements that hold these moments of Hollywood-simulated goodness together are of a sub-standard quality. Combine this with a host of sometimes amusing, mostly frustrating show-stopping bugs, and you've got a game that feels decidedly incomplete.

Simply put, *Driv3r* could've spent a heck of a lot

more time in the testing and polishing phase of the game's development and that it didn't is a serious indictment against Reflections' obvious talent and Atari's business acumen. When you consider that this is Reflections' fourth attempt (including *Stuntman*, excluding the PSX *Destruction Derby* series done for Psygnosis) at doing a mission-based, driving action game such a release is highly disappointing: you'd have thought that with so much practice and experience, they would have nailed it by now.

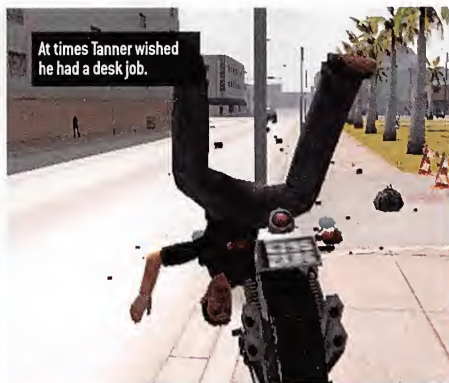
THE ART OF HOONING

Before you cry "rushed release", let's look at what *Driv3r* does do well. Reprising the role of Tanner, the square-jawed, undercover cop with attitude, *Driv3r* continues the legacy of the series by bringing you a collection of multiple-objective missions strung together by Hollywood style cut-scenes. Spanning 25 missions *Driv3r* documents Tanner's attempt at infiltrating a high-calibre car thieves' inner-circle through some Guy Ritchie inspired posing and fancy driving work.





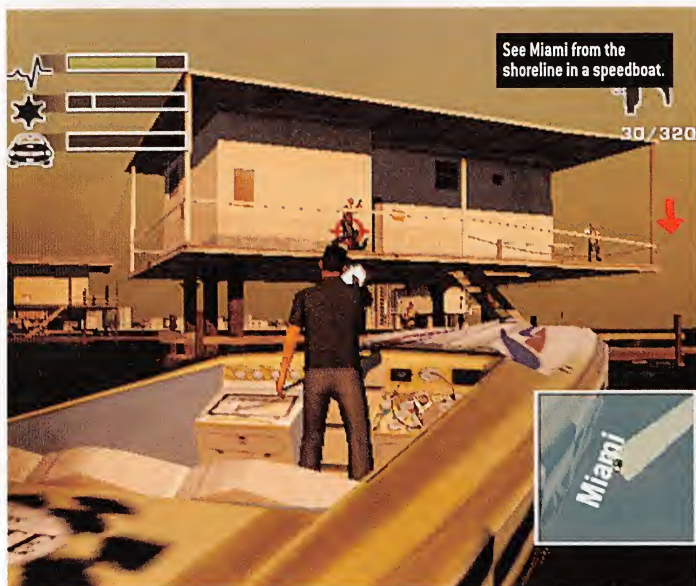
This cabbie won't be cutting you up again!



At times Tanner wished he had a desk job.



It might be crumpled, but at least it still drives.



See Miami from the shoreline in a speedboat.



Monster trucks do more damage. Fact!

But it's not all driving in *Driv3r* land. While *Driver 2* was the first in the series to allow you to walk on foot to facilitate car-jacking and swapping, *Driv3r* takes this one step further by introducing firearm use as a new element of gameplay for fans of the series to experience. And while there is a very clear line between the two types of play – rarely are you given the opportunity during regular missions to get out of your vehicle to attempt a ballistic approach at a driving level – *Reflections* at least had the good sense to mix up most of the missions' sub sections between the two. With a ratio of roughly three-quarters driving sequences to one-quarter running/shooting ones in a series that had prided itself on its almost exclusive focus on cinematic driving action, *Driv3r* feels more like a contemporary – rather than a leader – in a genre it helped to establish, even if its at the expense of the dilution of the series' original vision.

“SIMPLY PUT, DRIV3R COULD'VE SPENT A HECK OF A LOT MORE TIME IN THE TESTING AND POLISHING PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT.”

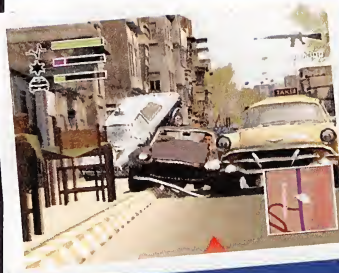
The driving sections, at least, are consistent with *Driver* and *Driver 2*; the driving model of *Driv3r* remains remarkably solid, even if it does sacrifice realism for a Hollywood-inspired sense of exaggerated physics. The damage modelling in *Driv3r*'s vehicles is also mostly excellent – something which *Reflections* showed great talent in with their work on *Destruction Derby* – and providing an entertaining indicator of your foul-ups and crashes.

Visually, the *Driver* series has certainly benefited from moving to the PS2, with some beautifully presented and realised environments to drive

around in thanks to the increase in technical muscle. Much has been already said about the three cities on offer – Miami USA, France's rustic city of Nice and Turkey's Istanbul – and it's clear where much of the attention has been focused in development. The horribly pixelated textures of *Driver 1* and *2* have made way for some sharp, well designed visuals. While Miami is the perfect starting-place for newcomers with its flat, open, sprawling design, Nice ups the ante with a worthy contrast offering tighter streets and greater changes in elevation. Istanbul is quite similar in this regard, although it is decidedly grittier than its predecessors. The cities are generally a real pleasure to explore, with a now mandatory collection of cars and pedestrians bringing the varied locations and massive maps to life. And with many a different type of vehicle to find and commandeer – from motorbikes, speedboats, >

A VIEW TO A THRILL

Mangle your motor in super slow-mo with the spectacular new 'Thrill-cam'.



> The game chooses the best view for your crash.



> You can still control your car for extra finesse.



> Head-on collisions look undeniably spectacular.



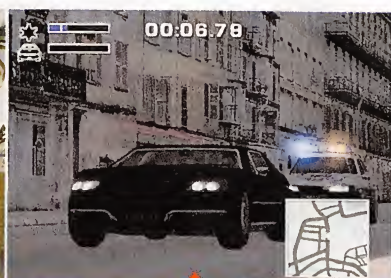
> A glancing collision gets you airborne!



Done with Story mode? What else does *Driv3r* offer?



QUICK CHASE Without an encompassing story or a wider goal, it all feels a bit sterile. Boredom tends to set in pretty quickly. More chase variations would have added to the fun.



QUICK GETAWAY Similar to Quick Chase but even more pointless, as you don't see your adversary much. A few unlockable bonuses would have helped immeasurably.



TRAIL BLAZER This is a bit more like it. The kind of challenge that has that 'just-one-last-try' level of addictiveness as you try to knock down all the traffic cones.



SURVIVAL A good laugh for a while as you try to avoid the law for as long as you possibly can. Gets bloody difficult though. This is the sort of thing we were hoping for from *Driv3r*.



CHECKPOINT RACE Race around town trying to reach checkpoints before the timer runs out. The nearest thing to a normal timed challenge. More fun than your average chase, in fact.



GATE RACE Try to make it through a series of gates, with tight turns and traffic making things very testing indeed. Our favourite mini-game out of a fairly poor showing. Must try harder!

sports cars to 18-wheelers – you are certainly offered ample opportunity to explore off the beaten track.

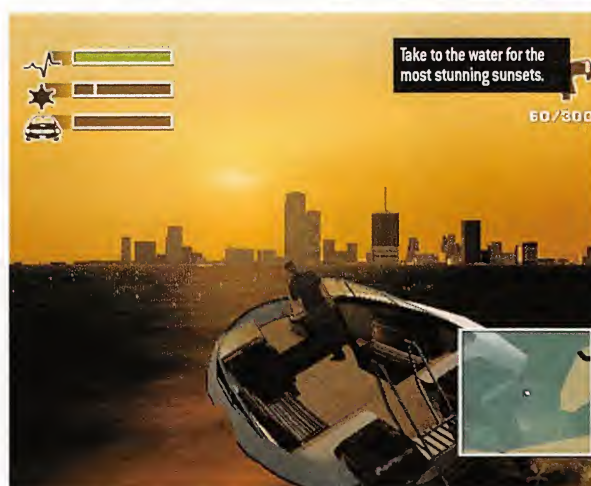
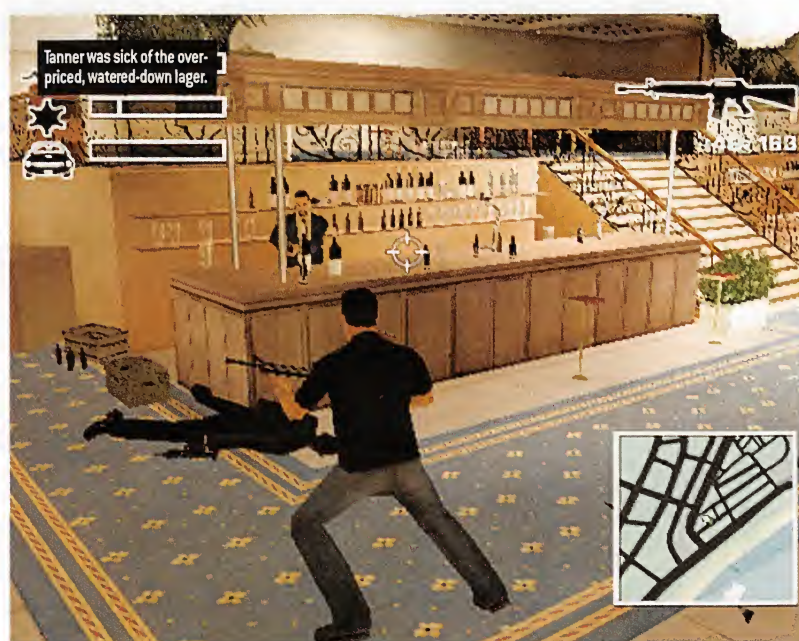
But getting back to Reflections' original game vision of epic and cinematic car sequences, *Driv3r* is an ambitious but anal taskmaster. Plenty of thought has gone into devising some interesting and varied missions throughout the game, and *Driv3r* does sometimes succeed in placing you in the middle of some spectacular situations. A good chunk of the missions require basic chasing after or escaping from other vehicles to achieve success, with some truly creative sub-missions interspersed within them. One has you crashing through a mock-construction yard causing as much destruction as possible, while another has you emulating the core of the movie *Speed* in that you have to maintain a certain velocity to avert disaster. There's even a

Knight Rider inspired mission where you must drive a collection of vehicles into the back of a moving truck. And although we've done it before, there really is a lot of fun to be had in attempting to escape an area with scores of gunmen and vehicles do everything in their power to prevent it.

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

While it's clear that plenty of love and attention has been lavished on the presentation of the *Driv3r* universe by Reflections, something went wrong in the implementation of an entertaining game within it. The foundations of a great game are tantalisingly present in *Driv3r*, but a whole host of lazy design choices conspire against players receiving any lasting joy from it. Sure, there are moments of brilliance – as described above – but these require so much work and





“FROM CHALLENGING TIME-LIMITS TO POOR LEVEL DESIGN, DRIV3R FINDS ANY EXCUSE TO PUNISH YOU AND IT FINDS THEM OFTEN.”



heartache that you'll wonder if it was all worth it at the end.

First and foremost it's the prohibitive difficulty level; an unfortunate trait inherited from the early days of *Driver* and *Driver 2* and the more recent and widely criticised *Stuntman*. Here fun takes a backseat to realism. And not in one case or area of the game, but in pretty much all of them. From challenging time limits to poor level design, weak interface elements to outright bugginess, *Driv3r* finds any excuse to punish you and it finds them often.

Take the basics of a driving sequence. Even with the inclusion of a mini-map with (poorly sized) mission indicators of destination or chase subject, *Reflections* doesn't give you much power in deciding how you want to com-

plete a mission. Want to cut a car off at by taking a different route you can spy on your map? Nope – you've lost a visual on it and so it's mission failed. Take a corner just a little too wide or lose some speed after careening into a light pole and you've just given your target a lead and its mission failed. Or how about missing a mission objective because you simply can't clearly see the marker representing it? And let's not forget the completely ridiculous level design. Given the slow and sliding car physics, there are just too many opportunities in any given area to crash or bring your car to a halt, quickly bringing the mission to an end. Be it the way-too narrow alleyways or the rock solid shrubs or ubiquitous light-poles of death, *Driv3r* requires some very





Well, at least it *looks* nice... sort of.



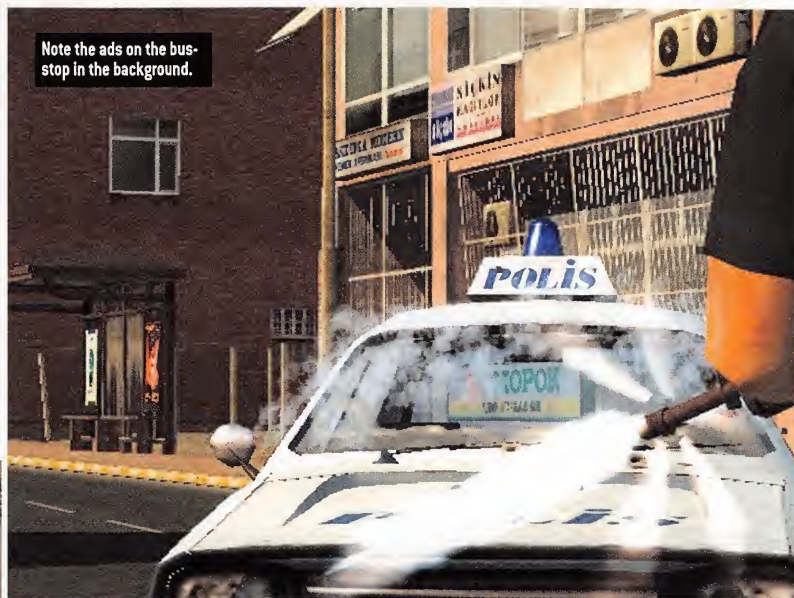
The car physics are impressive, but harsh.



Gritty Istanbul in all its... gritty glory.



Thankfully, *Driv3r* is usually a little livelier than this.



Note the ads on the bus-stop in the background.



That car looks like this game plays...



I believe the appropriate term for this is 'CRUNCH'.



Not pictured: massive, game-ruining bugs.

precise handling if you want to avoid the mission restart screen.

But by far the worst offender of the lot is the new on-foot combat mode. Ignoring the poorly animated Tanner, these sections are beset with a whole host of awful problems. Control of Tanner is twitchy at best, and Reflections has made things that much harder by creating some of the most claustrophobic levels seen in a game of this type.

More often than not you run into your opponents at very close range, and while your opponents are stupid enough to do nothing more than their scripted instructions no matter the circumstances, they're an excellent shot close up. Conversely, Tanner's prowess with a gun is terrible at close range thanks to the slow response of the targeting reticule, but excellent from a distance of a hundred meters away.

Combine the crappy controls and player AI with a camera that often gets stuck on walls and frequently prevents you from actually showing you where your enemies are shooting from and you have a recipe for disaster. Thankfully there are enough on-foot sections in open spaces to make up for the pointless difficulty of the confined ones.

And then there are the bugs – *Driv3r* is infested with them. From bizarre car physics to bouncing crates of death and plenty of camera glitches, Reflections provide another method of artificially lengthening the game. A favourite here at PSW is the speedboat bug, where you sometimes and inexplicably meet instant death when trying to disembark from the craft. One of the more frustrating ones is the sensitivity of the game's targeting reticules – opponents in your sights often magically avoid bullets, even

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A DRIV3R DRIVER



10:30 AM: Start mission by running round the side of a building, and marvel at just how stupid my opponents are. They stand in one spot and repeatedly miss me when firing. After an easy dispatch, I'm surprised that I am taking damage from an attacker that I can't actually see. I die.

10:40 AM: After a restart, the pursuit soon moves in-car not before a basic game-engine cut scene - with my target effortlessly making it through a police blockade. After I hit a wooden crate that my target graced though and loose control, I'm required to restart the level.

10:59 AM: I've decided that anything other than the air I breathe is a serious hazard. I can power-slide round a corner with ease; basic manoeuvring proves disastrous. Seeing that this is my thirteenth attempt at the level, I place a curse on the heads of each and every member of Reflections and their families for making me repeat the shooting section each and every time I restart, and for making it so I can't skip through the utterly pointless and time-consuming cutscene. Did I mention that this is only the game's second level?

11:25 AM: Manage to give good chase to the bandit on my 24th attempt, but am clipped by a slight nick of a light pole. Restart the mission after a few moments of uncontrollable sobbing.



He just drove through Redfern, no doubt.



The police are tenacious and volatile foes.



Wow - what a speed machine that must be.



Just don't try doing this at close range.

at near point blank range! Or how about the one where when you go enter a vehicle but Tanner instead turns the other way, forcing a mission failure for being too slow? Marvellous!

MEAN STREETS

So *Driv3r* is very frustrating. But then, that's the price of sticking to the script. Reflections hate *Driver* being compared to the *Grand Theft Auto* series and rightfully so; both games go about achieving their similar goals in different ways. But Reflections would be wise to take a leaf out of Rockstar's book. Where *GTA* promotes exploration and supports player choice within a seamless environment, Reflections have man-

aged to avoid evolving their series in any meaningful, enjoyable way. *Driv3r* is put together in a rather unsophisticated manner: missions are entirely linear so if you find yourself stuck (as you often will in the game) you'll just have to persevere. It's their way or the highway. Same with mission objectives - while there are some examples where's the more than one way to finish a level, more often than not you are punished for not strictly adhering to the script.

There are other game modes separate to the main story mode available from the main menu, including a free drive around the three cities and a couple of race/escape-style modes for some incidental fun. Reflections has also includ-

ed a rather comprehensive movie-editing mode to allow you to create some classy films out of saved replays. The trouble is, only the truly enamoured fans of the series and would-be film students would feel compelled to spend time going over ground that had been so painfully covered at least a dozen times before in attempt to complete the mission.

Driv3r is a major disappointment. The lack of any substantial evolution in game design from *Driver* and *Driver 2* is forgivable, the obvious lack of polish is most definitely not. It is this that ultimately lets *Driv3r* down.

/MARCH STEPNIK

PSW VERDICT

UPPERS

- > Impressive driving environments
- > Strong building and vehicle visuals
- > Movie-style action
- > Fun car physics

DOWNERS

- > Frustratingly hard
- > Unforgiving mission structure
- > Shite on-foot sections
- > Buggy

GRAPHICS > Stronger than Stuntman, nicer than Vice City.

8

SOUNDS > Some strong tunes, but repetition is a killer

7

GAMEPLAY > Getting through this game once is more than enough.

6

OVERALL SCORE

All style, no substance, *Driv3r* is a monumental disappointment that fails on every level that matters.

4



SHELLSHOCK: NAM '67

Lock and load soldier. Your tour of duty is about to begin. Welcome to hell.



> TYPE	SHOOTING
> PLAYERS	1
> OUT	AUGUST
> PUBLISHER	EIDOS
> DEVELOPER	GUERRILLA
> ONLINE	NO

IT MAY BE LOOKED UPON AS A FORGETTABLE, 'unwinnable' conflict, but boy, was the Vietnam War important. For a start it (all too briefly) woke America up to the fact that overwhelming firepower doesn't always win wars. And, just as importantly, without Vietnam some of the best war films ever made wouldn't have existed. The dramatic helicopter assault in *Apocalypse Now*? Never would have happened. The bootcamp bully-boy carnage of *Full Metal Jacket*? Hell, they'd probably just've made another *Police Academy* instead. And what about the epic *Rambo* - a film

that was single-handedly responsible for a million schoolboys the world over demanding a 'special forces style' knife for Christmas. Yep, Vietnam's effect on society is incalculable and now, thanks to *ShellShock: Nam '67*, it's about to take equal hold on the collective consciousness of the PS2 gaming masses too.

Turn the lights down, crank the sound up and bolt the door. Maybe even tie your parents to a kitchen stool and pluck their eyebrows out with some BBQ tongs, ignoring any threats about making you homeless. You never know where a

Charlie might strike next. *ShellShock* is the kind of game that doesn't just let you pretend you're a young and heavily-armed Sylvester Stallone. It dumps you in the middle of a merciless jungle, chucks a load of whiffy brown stuff at a whizzing fan and leaves you to prize the shrapnel from your thumping chest with a rusty penknife. Snap your *ShellShock* disc in half and it will probably bleed napalm. This game is every single 'Nam film you've ever seen plus a few others thrown in for good measure. The only difference being that this time it's your ass in harm's way. Can you smell the fear and feel the soggy trickle down your trouser leg yet? Don't fret. You soon will...

ShellShock excels at capturing the look and feel of war-torn Vietnam. Many classic Vietnam movies have been plundered, a whole decade of modern culture has been painstakingly scoured for references and inspiration, while entire jungles have been squashed and shrunk to fit into your PS2 in their entirety. It won't just bring on a bout of post-traumatic stress, it'll have you swearing like a gangsta rapper with a severe case of Tourettes. *Medal of Honor*? Don't make us laugh. This is proper war.





It all begins with a cargo plane unloading its compliment of nervous grunts onto a dusty airfield. Sounds oddly familiar, doesn't it? The movie references come thick and fast but never feel contrived. On the contrary, they manage to evoke plenty of smiles and have the effect of reminding you just how many hours you've wasted watching drill sergeants bellowing orders at raw recruits and angry young men diving for cover when they stumble into their first ambush. If, like us, you love your war movies you'll revel in the constant nods and nudges towards *Platoon* and co.

But better than this are the entire recreations of some of the best movie moments out there. You're not just watching it and smirking like a loon, you're right there in the midst of all the shouting, screaming and swearing as utter pandemonium unfolds. At one point you're tasked with protecting a fort. Hopelessly outnumbered, facing wave after wave of VC troops, it's a genuinely terrifying experience.

TURKEY SHOOT

From there you find yourself peering through your night vision sniper rifle. Slowly little red specks of body heat start to move from behind the trees. You pick one off with a headshot but more appear. Suddenly there's too many to keep track of and they're too close for sniping. You grab hold of a gun emplacement and mow them down with a satisfying joypad judder and deafening whirr. "Take that you mother, and you, you want some too, F\$%K YOUUUUUUUUU!" But still they keep on coming. Gradually you're

"SHELLSHOCK IS EVERY SINGLE 'NAM FILM YOU'VE EVER SEEN, WITH A FEW MORE THROWN IN FOR GOOD MEASURE TOO."

forced to fall back until there's nowhere left to retreat to. Suicide bombers scream their way towards you creating genuine panic as you know you've got to take them down with your first shot. Literally hundreds of Charlies pile up the stairs leaving a mound of chopped down bodies to scramble over and still they keep coming. It's just like that moment in *Black Hawk Down* when the two Delta Force soldiers protect the downed helicopter while a mob of Somalis storm towards them firing and dying in their hundreds. Your finger is almost welded to the

trigger and when you run out of ammo you simply throw it to the ground and pick up another from a downed comrade. It's superbly tense and utterly believable for those frantic few minutes.

This isn't an isolated incident. The movie-inspired moments just keep on coming but thanks to the wealth of inspirational material on offer the variety is unrivalled. One minute it's an all-out balls-to-the-wall bullet frenzy that'll have your ear drums buzzing, the next it's a village search full of trepidation and fear that you don't stumble into a booby trap or have your guts ripped out by some VC hiding in a bowl of rice.

The fact that your squad mates are constantly yelling at each other, bitching and swearing while the enemy directs taunts at them and your radio chatters with instructions >

RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

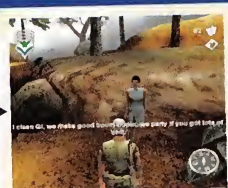
Trade valuables looted from the corpses of your VC victims to cop off with the local gals.



1. Psst. Resident 'Del Boy' Deuce will sell you an R&R pass for 25 Chits.



2. With it you'll be able to leave the camp with the blessing of the gate guard.



3. Your parents would be so proud. The local pro even gives you a free condom.



4. And a quick demonstration of her bra size confirms how horny she is. Get stuck in.



from HQ just adds to the juicy experience. Charlie even try to wind you up with insults in expertly done Viet-speak. *ShellShock* positively drips with 'Nam authenticity. A multitude of mini set-piece moments work fantastically, drawing you into the war and cranking up the anger as you see one of your cocky squad mates spiked to death by a bloody great booby trap in gruesome fashion. (See panel.)

LOVE YOU LONG TIME

In between missions it's time for some serious 'R&R'. You get to wander around camp chatting to your new buddies, freshen up your rifle skills at the shooting range, or just listen to the banter on camp radio. You can even while away the hours with a loose local female if that's your thing, or you can pick up some contraband – that's drugs to you and me – from the resident 'fix-it' man. Collecting valuables from downed enemies during missions helps to boost your currency and enable you to pick up those vital 'go-pills' to black out the atrocities that surround you and keep you focused on the main task of killing Charlie. Again it's a superb way of drawing you into the whole 'Nam experience. You get to familiarise yourself with your squad while the game brings you down after the last lead-spraying adrenalin buzz.

At the start of the game you're thrown right in at the deep end. Something which is constantly re-enforced by your comrades' disdain for this newcomer and the steady flow of disparaging "cherry" (virgin) remarks aimed in your

direction. You're new, nervous and totally confused about what's going on, so the game cranks it up a bit more by dumping you straight into a chaotic jungle firefight. Survive this and you start to discover that there's a wider purpose to all the killing and suffering.

Dying soldiers and rescued POWs continuously mention a mythical rebel leader called King Kong. He's managing to rally the opposition forces and drawing new recruits to the cause every day. You just know that somewhere along the line a showdown is looming. As you continue to perform your duty with distinction the boys from Special Forces begin to notice your handywork and you're



quickly drafted in for some tense 'behind enemy lines' work that draws you closer to King Kong. Your purpose becomes more focused and essential to the war effort. It's also a good opportunity to sprinkle a bit of stealth into the mix. Time to unsheathe that *Rambo* knife and slit a few unsuspecting necks. However, the best thing about rising through the ranks is simply no longer looked upon as an insignificant cherry. You see, it gets under your skin. Before long you're genuinely living the experience – you're a proper soldier now.

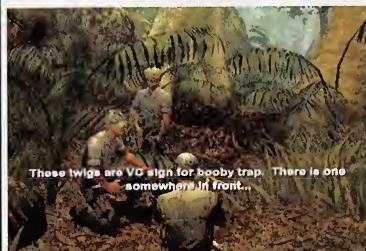
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Initially your missions seem a little uninspiring and pretty much by-the-numbers for a shooting game, but it's not long before the game winds up absolutely everything. Your tasks become more varied, interesting and imaginative. The scenes are more evocative and thrilling. Clever little ideas are sprinkled about like magic dust. Having to defuse booby traps is a delightful little moment that's a simple mini-game in itself. Claustrophobic tunnel searches break up the relentless firefight pandemonium and only serve to increase the tension another notch. Like we've already said, absolutely everything 'Nam is in here. What starts out as just another shooter develops into so much more simply because they've done such a superb job of chucking you right into the middle of 'Nam circa '67. The Small Faces, Roy Orbison and The Monkees are even playing on the radio. Superb.

The decision to break from a first-person viewpoint to a third-person view is a little disappointing. We always find this viewpoint a little less accurate for shooting and movement always seems to be clumsier. Luckily in the current situation it's something that only serves to heighten the general chaos even more. Firing

CASUALTIES OF WAR

When it comes to booby traps, you'll need to learn from the mistakes of your team mates.



Twigs on the ground mean there's a booby trap nearby. Slow down and stay sharp.



One cocky soldier volunteers to scout ahead. The fool. We doubt he'll last long.



Looks like you're just in time to see him caught in a punji stake trap.



There's no time for mourning the loss of a comrade. It could be you next.



all over the shop and just praying that a few slivers of hot lead make contact is probably about as realistic as you can make it. The whole game is geared towards making you feel that absolutely everything has hit the fan, you're way in over your head, frighteningly outnumbered and blinded by panic.

Unfortunately, quite a few of the missions are blighted by confusion over what to do next. Yes, it probably was massively confusing over there in '67, but thirty years on there's really no need to spend quite so long wandering about in bewilderment. Usually it's an unclear mission objective or getting lost in the similar-looking jungle environments. It's nothing that will destroy your overall sense of fun but it can prove infuriating for a while. This is especially so when a particular event is required to take place before you can proceed. At one point we were tasked with blowing up a sentry gun. Having successfully completed the objective we spent

at least ten minutes wandering around unable to get any further into the level until we realised that the grenade we lobbed had failed to totally clear the debris from our path. With the objective already completed there was no way of knowing this. We only managed to work it out through blind frustration. This is one of a number of similarly frustrating, unclear incidents.

BOX ME UP AND SEND ME HOME

The nature of the massive gunfights also leads to a slight element of randomness, where luck plays a big part in whether you bite the big one from all that flying shrapnel. Once again though, that's exactly how it was back then. It's just that, as a game, you never want failure to be a result of anything other than your own incompetence. Getting so far only to be cut down in your prime by a stray bullet might be maddening but at least you can unzip that body bag and dive right back into the action. However,

"IT GETS UNDER YOUR SKIN. BEFORE LONG YOU'RE LIVING THE EXPERIENCE – YOU'RE A PROPER SOLDIER NOW"

thanks to the clever health bar innovation it's not nearly as irritating as it could be.

The clever variation of your health bar in *Shellshock* is something we really like. Rather than just getting permanently depleted every time you take a hit, it slowly replenishes over time. This gives you the opportunity to find some cover when you've been hit and hole up until you can pop your head out without the fear of one lucky bullet with your name on it putting an immediate end to your heroics. For a game with so much lead flying about, we can't think of a fairer way to keep the action moving along. Don't be fooled into thinking this makes the game easy though. You will still die an awful

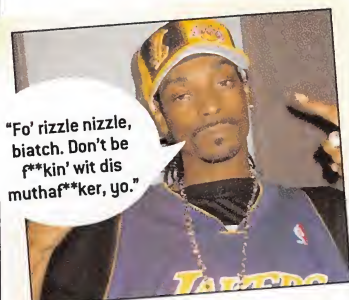


"EVERYTHING IS DISGUSTING, VILE AND FOUL MOUTHED. YOU WANT REALISM? SHELLSHOCK DELIVERS IT IN SPADES.

F% YOU AND YOUR F**@ING MOTHER, YOU ******

It's not big. And it's not clever. Except when war's involved.

Unless your Snoop Dogg or Eminem, swearing just for the sake of it just doesn't sound right. Look at *The Getaway*. Or rather, listen to *The Getaway*. The over-the-top swearing might sound funny if your nine years old, but it comes across as contrived and frankly ridiculous to the rest of us. *ShellShock* traverses the expletive tightrope by using the odd F**@ and **** only when the situation demands it (like, when your outnumbered 200-1), so it never comes across as juvenile.



lot. At times this game is hard as nails but that's exactly how videogame war should be. You need to have death waiting behind every tree and lurking beneath every paddy field in order to create that nerve-fraying tension.

Credit must go to the developers for making *ShellShock* one of the first genuinely mature titles we've had the pleasure of playing. It's violent, gruesome and has a penchant for bad language (see panel) but that's exactly how anything 'Nam, or indeed war, related should be. Never is violence, gore or swearing used simply to be controversial or to gain a bit of extra publicity in the tabloids. Did someone just mention *The Getaway*? *ShellShock* is nothing like it. Everything is exactly how it should be in a cold-blooded war – disgusting, vile and foul mouthed. You want realism? *ShellShock* delivers it in spades.

FIRE IN THE HOLE!

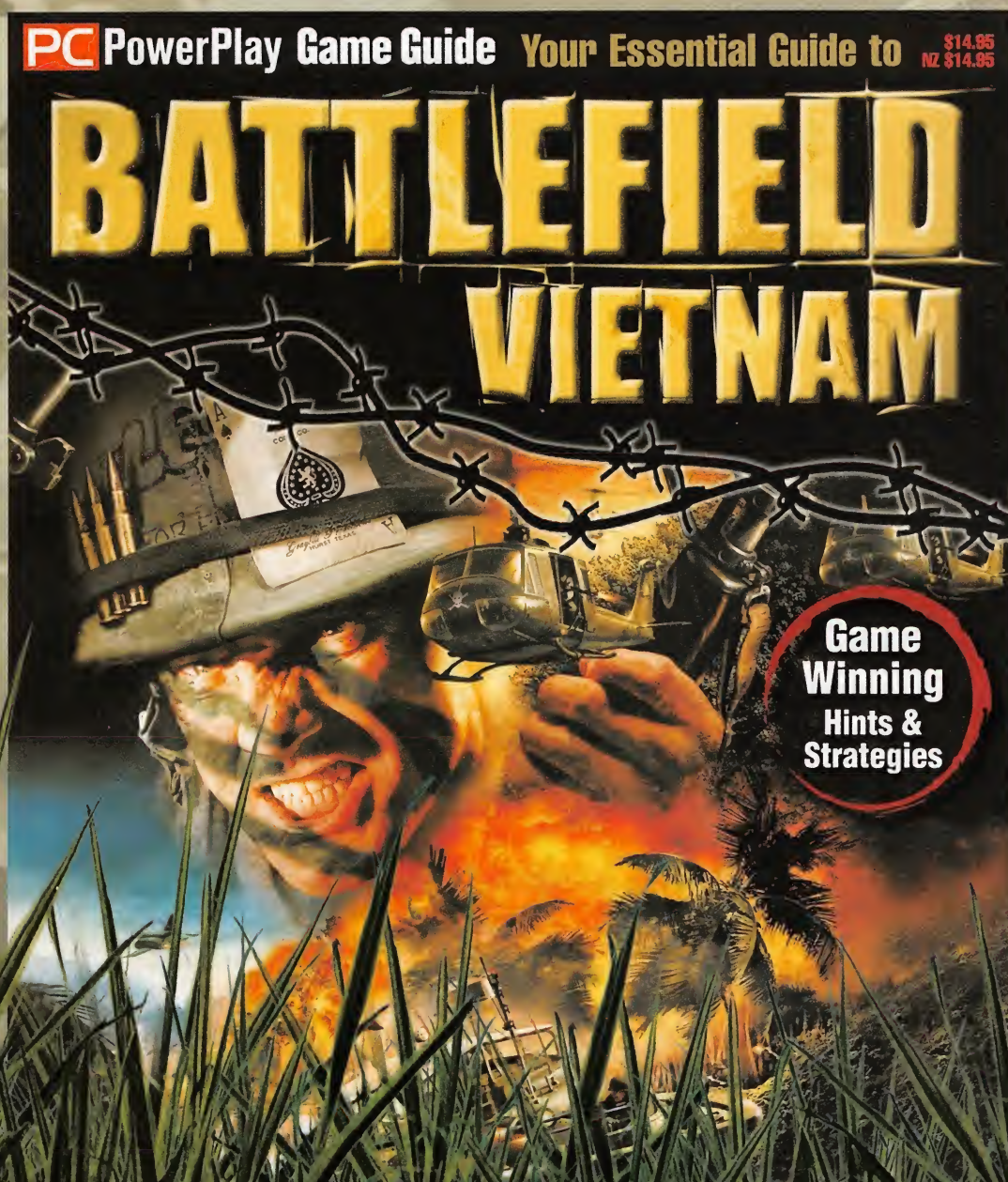
It also delivers the best use of grenades yet in a game. For the first time they feel as essential as your automatic rifle. Accurately lobbing one into the midst of your foes during a gunfight can totally turn the tide of battle. In a nod to *Splinter Cell* you can line up your trajectory before launching it through the air. Of course, with so much lead shooting about you've only got a split second to stick your neck out and chuck it skywards. It's anxious stuff with joyously destructive rewards.

ShellShock might not look very special but that only adds to the overwhelming air of unpleasant grittiness. Technically and visually it's nothing more than an accomplished, better than average shooter. It's thanks to the terrific movie inspiration, imaginative level design and magnificent use of sound that *ShellShock* is lifted into the upper echelons of war gaming. In fact, for making you feel like you're actually part of a genuine, detestable war and the star of your very own Oscar-nominated classic, it has no peers. Finally a game that realises the whole package is so much more than slick controls and smooth movement.

/ MIKE FOLEY

PSW VERDICT	
UPPERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superb voice acting Unrivalled atmosphere Impressive mission variety Involving squaddie banter 	DOWNERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doesn't look great Hard as nails at times Some unclear objectives Stealth a bit tiresome
GRAPHICS > War is never pretty. Neither is this	7
SOUNDS > Used magnificently to create atmosphere	10
GAMEPLAY > Variety keeps things fresh and vibrant	8
OVERALL SCORE A genuine gaming 'wargasm'. Every single war movie-inspired fantasy wrapped up inside a joyously rewarding shooter. It makes <i>Medal of Honor</i> look like a Disney cartoon.	
8	

your ULTIMATE guide to



in stores september 2004



RICHARD BURNS RALLY

It's the world's hardest, most intense rally game. But does this make it more realistic and rewarding, or just more frustrating and difficult?



> TYPE	RACING
> PLAYERS	1
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	SCI
> DEVELOPER	SCI
> ONLINE	NO

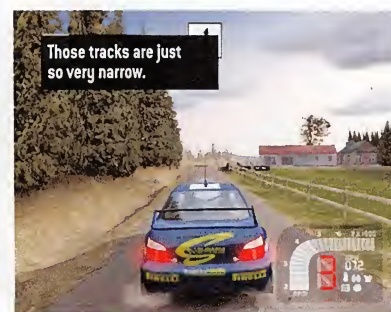
IT'S THE TWENTY-THIRD TIME WE'VE DONE THIS.

Switch on the engine, wind up the revs and pop the clutch on 'Go'. Tyres spin on the loose gravel before the rubber bites and our four-wheel drive, 300 BHP monster lurches from the gate like an angry bull. The speedometer buzzes as the trees whizz through our peripheral vision in a distorted blur of speed. The first corner is almost upon us so we hit the brakes hard. The car dips and as we

loosen our foot and spin the wheel, the back end slides out as the nose tucks into the bend. The narrow track flashes back to the right as the car pendulums round, miraculously squeezing itself through the chicane before emerging on a mercifully straight road. A bridge ahead narrows the useable part of the track down to the width of our car. We aim dead straight and accelerate on, trusting that we'll keep moving forwards and not into the stream. We're still alive for now but the next corner is tighter still and we're travelling extremely fast. The brakes scream and hiss as we throw the car as hard right as it can go. It's too little, too late and the car slips off the road.

The ditch that marks out the trackside grips the wheels and the car flips, smashing into the trees with a hideous crunch. As the tangled mess of our car slides down into the muddy trench, we call out for help but there is none. Our rally is over. Still, we made it round two corners. Not bad going really, all things considered...

Richard Burns Rally is very, very hard you see. Compared to doing long division in your head, it's still really very hard. Compared to say, fighting a heavily-armed Great White shark while juggling sixteen flaming Bengali tigers, it's, erm, difficult. This is a rallying game for people who really love rallying but love a challenge even more.





Your career as a would be rally supremeo starts at the Forest Experience Rally School, the very same rally school in north Wales that witnessed the beginning of Richard Burns' career. Before they let you out on the track, you have to complete a series of short exercises covering basics such as cornering, gear choice and braking, before going on to do your first licence test. This is a short run down the rally school's track – a loose gravel road that's designed to test your newly-acquired driving skills with a variety of technical challenges. Successfully getting round the course, within the time limit and without smashing your car to bits,

"COMPARED TO FIGHTING A HEAVILY-ARMED GREAT WHITE SHARK WHILE JUGGLING SIXTEEN FLAMING BENGALI TIGERS, IT'S HARD."

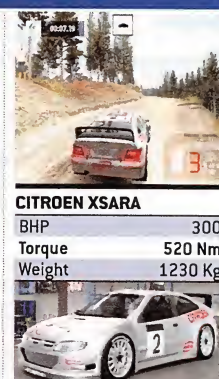
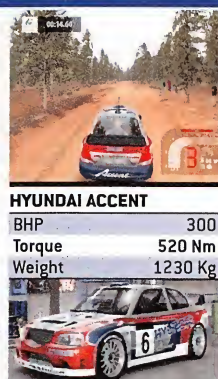
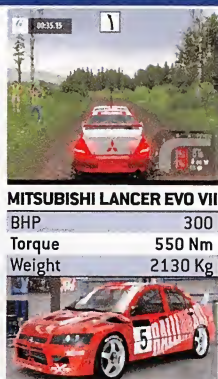
will grant you access to your first rally proper. The game recommends that you take the advanced rally course before getting this far, and well it might, because your first rally will make you want to cry tears of frustration.

The rallies are set across six counties: Great Britain, Japan, Finland, USA, France and Australia. Each country has around six courses

on offer. Initially only one course from each country is available to race in Quick Rally mode, with the others unlocked as you progress through the Rally Season mode. They offer a great selection of technical challenges, with Finland seeing you driving on snow and ice, Australia racing on dirt and the French track having you cork-screwing up the side of a mountain on winding tarmac roads. Rally Seasons are available in Amateur, Professional and Champion settings, taking in four, five or six courses respectively. Naturally, as the difficulty rises, so the qualifying times required become harder and the damage level higher. >

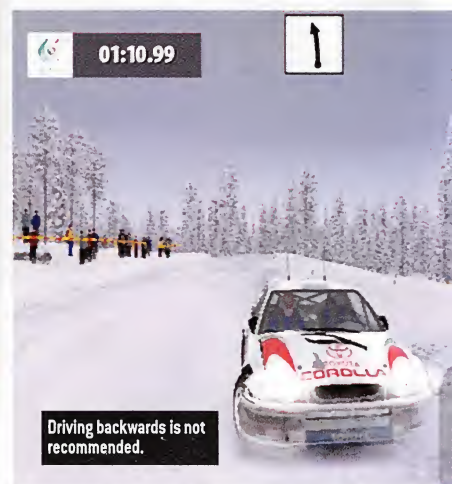
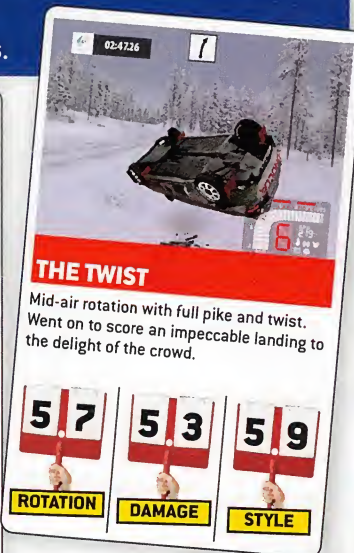
THE SHOWROOM

Take to the roads in a beautiful selection of soon-to-be-destroyed 4WD beauties.



SMASH MY BITCH UP

Destroying your car is a never-ending journey of discovery. Here are a few of our favourite smashes.



Nah, scrub that – they are all incredibly, difficult whatever the level.

Completing even the basic rally is a real trial of both skill and patience. Although the game is reasonably forgiving of even fairly major accidents on the easier damage settings, you will find the car sliding, spinning and bouncing around the track in almost uncontrollable ways. This is down to the unbelievably accurate and comprehensive physics system running the show. It starts with the car itself – your car is simulated in the most incredible detail possible. Every single component acts in the correct fashion to make your virtual rally car behave like

a real rally car, and thanks to the insanely deep damage modelling system they also act in such a way as to make the car not work when it ploughs head-first into a tree too. This level of depth means that once the hard work of making the little electronic model of the car is done, all the rest of the realistic car behaviour comes for free. The cars in *Richard Burns Rally* are not compromised for trifling little things like fun or usability. They are as literal a translation of the real thing as possible.

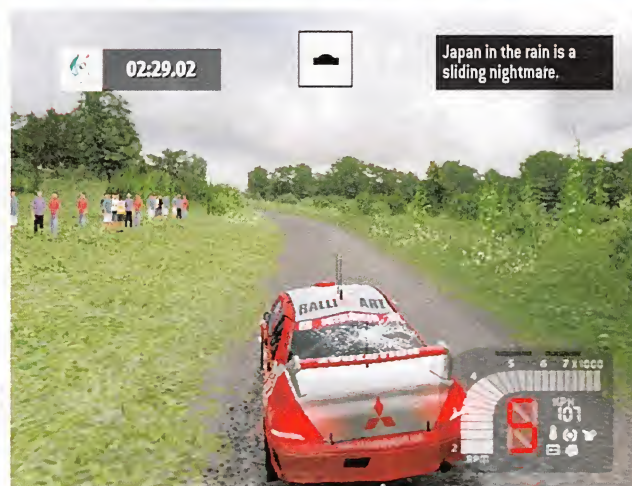
Damage levels range from 'Off' for the ladies up to 'Realistic' for the madmen out there, with two levels in between. While the lower levels are less than exciting, racing with the damage set to 'Realistic' is a terrifying experience that makes hitting stuff and coming to a standstill as easy as breathing. Your car can be finished off by a rock in the road, although sometimes it can survive a triple roll over and keep on trucking. Just like real rally cars. Knowing that the slightest error, or bit of bad luck can see you out of the really does ram your heart into your mouth and right down the back of your throat – when keeping the car under control is as hard as it is here, death is a near given.

It's not just the cars that have been

fashioned with an insane level of depth. The tracks are similarly detailed and accurate, filled with divots, ditches, potholes, dips and rocks. The roads are never flat either – there's always a camber to take into account, plus all manner of ditches and neatly positioned trees waiting for you to make a mistake so they can embed themselves in your bumper. With a perfectly accurate rally car on perfectly accurate tracks, you're left with an exhilarating and hugely demanding experience.

In graphical terms *Richard Burns* is pretty if not stunning. Unsurprisingly, the bar is set to maximum realism and as such, there are a lot of





sombre greys and browns. Real rallies are often held in somewhat desolate places like Wales and the outback, so don't expect any staggering feats of graphical finery. What you do get is a kind of restrained photo-realism. In terms of explosive shock and awe there's little to see, but if you want an immersive and convincing rally game world, this is it.

The sound is similarly convincing. Engine notes are stunning and the way they become more and more throaty to the point of pure evil as the damage ranks up is superb. This means that the conveyance of power is brilliantly done and the spot effects are just as good. The ever-changing road surfaces are expressed not only by the graphics and the handling but also by the sound along with every bump, jostle and prang. The pace notes are similarly well-recorded and processed. It really does sound as if the co-driver is in the car with you, although he doesn't sound quite as scared as we are. Also lovely are the noises you and your co-driver make as you get tossed around the car when the machine rolls down a cliff, as it will, over and over and over again. Actually, thinking about it, perhaps 'lovely' is the wrong word to use here. Maybe 'horrifying' would be a more appropriate term.

"IT'S NOT JUST THE CARS THAT HAVE BEEN FASHIONED WITH AN INSANE LEVEL OF DEPTH. THE TRACKS ARE SIMILARLY DETAILED."

But do you want to play this game? Do you want to put your hand in your pocket, take out a bunch of crisp twenty-dollar notes and give them to the spotty teenager behind the cash register in exchange for this game? Do you want to spend your cash on all that technical know-how, physical modelling and ruthless, desperate, cruel realism? In a word – no. We cannot play this game. We cannot progress in this game. No matter how hard we try, we are beaten. Some of the finest thumbs in gaming live in this office, yet all proved completely incapable of actually performing the insanely difficult tasks this game put before them. Not only were we incapable of completing the tracks in any sort of competitive time, we didn't even enjoy not doing it. There is fun, huge fun, to be got from playing the game in a kind of survival mode – ramping the damage up to 'Realistic' and seeing how long you can stay alive. Throw a few mates in and you'll get some serious competition on the go.

But play it as intended and you'll tear your own head off with anger before you manage to actually complete a rally.

Richard Burns Rally is one of the greatest technical achievements on PS2. It's also one of the very most demanding video games on PS2. Sadly, it isn't one of the most enjoyable. Any element of fun is strangled by the excruciating realism, which'll deter anyone but the most ardent rally fan from persevering. It's fully hardcore, and all the worse for it.

/ MARK SORRELL

PSW VERDICT		
UPPERS	Sense of speed	DOWNERS
	Level of customisation	
	Intense fear	
	Ruthless realism	
GRAPHICS > Impressively realistic		8
SOUNDS > Impressively realistic		8
GAMEPLAY > Impressively realistic		4
OVERALL SCORE		
<i>Richard Burns Rally</i> is proof that realism doesn't always make for enjoyable gaming. While there is no doubting the technical brilliance on show, only hardcore rally fans will find it genuinely fun.		
		7



MASHED

Is this the best multiplayer racing game on PS2? Judging by our hopeless addiction to it over the past month, it could well be.



> TYPE	RACING
> PLAYERS	1-4
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	EMPIRE
> DEVELOPER	SUPERSONIC
> ONLINE	NO

YOU TAKE THE CORNER FLAT OUT, WEAVING your way between the flashing mines that spell instant death. The black car is still inching ahead of you, and if you can't keep up the pace it'll all be over. He'll win and that can't be allowed to happen. The other two racers are already out of the running and they sure as hell don't want either of you to win. They launch air strikes at your speeding cars and suddenly the race is between your car, the black car and the two cruise missiles rushing towards you. You're just about to fall just that bit too far behind when the black car hits the oil slick you cunningly laid at a tricky corner on your last lap. His car skids off the side of the track and as the doomed machine falls into the sea, the tracking missile hits its

target and the car explodes, just as you round the corner and claim your hard fought victory. This is *Mashed* and it's brilliant.

Mashed is a very simple game. Four cars race against each other and the last one standing is the winner. Viewed from a top-down perspective, the idea is to get so far ahead of the other cars that they're scrolled off the bottom of the screen. But it's not just about who's the fastest driver, there are weapons involved too, from machine guns to mines via missiles. If you can't out-drive your opponents you'll need to blow them up.

There are thirteen tracks available, ranging from simple ovals to complex winding circuits filled with jumps, death drops and hazards. They take in a huge variety of locations, from Egyptian

ruins to icy wastelands. Each track hosts a different type of vehicle, each with its own handling. These can be anything from Ferrari-a-likes to 1920's roadsters and all are rendered with plenty of character and attention to detail.

MIRROR, SIGNAL, CRASH, DIE

Your first few attempts will mostly be concerned with learning the routes because you'll hopefully be driving blind for considerable distances. The camera pans in and out depending on how far apart the players get, but when it reaches its maximum outward zoom players falling off the bottom of the screen are struck out. In contrast, the leader is at the absolute top of the screen, with no warning of corners, weapons or hazards on the track. Staying at the head of the pack requires players to use the Force to predict what's coming up, driving purely on instinct. While the player at the back has plenty of time to see what's on the way but is constantly under pressure to keep up the pace. The tiniest of errors will see them off the screen and out of the running. This brings a massive amount of tactics into play. Do you sprint for the front and rely on your supreme driving skills to win the race, or do you try to pick off the leader with a well-timed missile? Either can work, as can a thousand other techniques, from all-out aggression, to





cunning traps, to slick driving and everything in between. It's these constantly evolving tactics and skills that make this game shine so brightly.

LOOK AT THE IKKLE CARS

Graphically, *Mashed* looks appealing, if not technically stunning. The cars are tiny but their cartoon-like proportions give them loads of character. Weapon strikes cause the cars to set on fire and explode spectacularly. The levels are

"IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT WHO'S THE FASTEST DRIVER, THERE ARE WEAPONS INVOLVED TOO, FROM MACHINE GUNS TO MINES VIA MISSILES."

visually well designed and in some cases very pretty, but it's the sense of scale that sets the game apart. The bird's-eye view gives the whole game a sort of toy feeling – at times you'd swear

that you could reach into the screen and pick up the little cars. It all reminds us very much of running about on our hands on knees with a Matchbox car, screeching round the cat and smashing into mother's ankle. We really ought to stop doing that. All in, the game is cute but in a violent and destructive kind of way, a bit like a hamster with a rocket launcher.

It all looks good then, but we're not at all happy with the sound. Although the effects all >

WHAT DOES YOUR CAR SAY ABOUT YOU?

Picking a colour for your car can say more about you than you think. Here's the PSW guide to amateur car psychology.



BLUE

Patriotism and keeping the status quo are all important to the blue car driver. Most likely to be found hanging from the ceiling of a Cross brothel dressed in suspenders and bra, with an orange stuffed in his mouth.

BLUE CAR DRIVER:
George Bush



RED

Hot-blooded Latin lover with poor personal hygiene and excessive body hair sum up the personality of the red car. Most likely to have sex with fat middle-aged women while on holiday in Crete, and then cry about it.

RED CAR DRIVER:
Peter Andre



BLACK

Dark and mysterious, the black car is all about living life on the edge to make up for having a small penis. Most likely to claim to love bungee jumping while actually crying when they get too far up a ladder.

BLACK CAR DRIVER:
Fred Durst



GREEN

Sandal-wearing, goat's-milk drinking, beetle-driving owners of wildly overgrown pubic hair. You're most likely to find the green car driver crying into his delicious veggie burger, large fries and chocolate milkshake.

GREEN CAR DRIVER:
Paul McCartney



YELLOW

Massive cowards. Why they're playing a game like *Mashed* in the first place is a mystery. Most likely to be found cowering behind the sofa in a puddle of their own piss during scary episodes of *Neighbours*.

YELLOW CAR DRIVER:
The whole of France



PINK

Absolutely wishes they were a girl or perhaps is an actual girl. Loves nothing more than gingham hot pants and complimentary textures on their colour co-ordinated soft furnishings.

PINK CAR DRIVER:
Graham Norton





do their thing perfectly well, giving you a good knowledge of what's going on about you, the whole thing's let down by the quite terrible driver voices. Although, mercifully, they can be turned off, they're possibly the very worst vocals we've heard in any PlayStation2 game, ever. They rarely bear any great relevance to what's happening on the screen, they're far too loud, the accents are dubious at best and their range of insults are cringingly terrible. Rushing to the options screen and completely removing any trace of them from the game, then cutting off your own head and burning it seems to be just about the only way to remove the memory of their aural abuse from your life. Real life verbal batterings in multiplayer are much better.

MY FRIEND DOESN'T LIKE YOU EITHER

As good as the multiplayer is, *Mashed* is an extremely poor single-player experience. We can't stress that enough. No messing about – it's shit. The artificial intelligence is almost completely random, sometimes it'll drive like Michael Schumacher, at other times it'll stop or even reverse to let you catch up. At times it'll use weapons with stunning aggression and

pinpoint accuracy, at others it'll happily watch you drive past even though it's armed to the teeth with missiles and guns and maybe even an axe. You never feel any sort of excitement during races, no thrill of imminent victory or horror at your demise; it's just flat, dull and frustrating. Worse still are the Fugitive mode races that change the viewpoint from above to behind the car. This makes the machines harder to control and with the loss of weapons too, a good part of the game's unique appeal vanishes. The far-out viewpoint gives a wonderful view of the track and really lets the player plan ahead. Not so in Fugitive mode. But to unlock most of the tracks will take an hour or two at most and total completion should come well inside a day's play, so the torture shouldn't last long.

It does however point to the unapologetic emphasis on multiplayer. *Mashed* would have worked just as well had it had no single-player option whatsoever and unlocking extra tracks via multiplayer mode would have added an even greater thrill to proceedings. It's safe to say that the whole single-player section is a travesty of *Mashed* justice and could easily have been dropped entirely, the only problem being that it wasn't. We can't make the point strongly enough – this is a multiplayer game.

THE MAGIC'S ON TAP

Don't want to buy a Multitap just for *Mashed*? Here are four other reasons to get one now!



ATV OFFROAD FURY

Somehow this so-so quad racer explodes into unstoppable beauty when four players take to the screen. The Red Rock course in particular is a thing of pure genius.



ATHENS 2004

Four players is a must to get the most out of the more competitive challenges in this Olympics sim. Read about it this very issue. Page 80. When you're done with *Mashed*.



TIMESPLITTERS 2

Possibly the definitive four-player experience on PS2. OK, the graphics are looking a little old and the split screen'll make you squint. But second to none for addictiveness.



PES3

What, you haven't tried *PES3* with two players per team? Give it a go. It'll teach you a whole new skill set. And you've got someone else to blame when things go wrong.



"AS GOOD AS THE MULTIPLAYER IS, *MASHED* IS AN EXTREMELY POOR SINGLE-PLAYER EXPERIENCE. WE CAN'T STRESS THAT ENOUGH."



NO GO IN SOLO

Still, aside from the single player shambles, finding faults isn't easy; this game really does shine. There are a few problems with the camera – sometimes it'll focus on a dead player while the remaining competitors drive fully off the screen. Sometimes the last-placed player will be judged too far off the pace and die even though their car is still easily visible. Sometimes buildings get between the camera and the action, obscuring your view of the carnage. The trials and tribulations of keeping focus on four rapidly moving cars around sometimes complex environments clearly talks its toll on the camera and although this isn't a big problem, when it

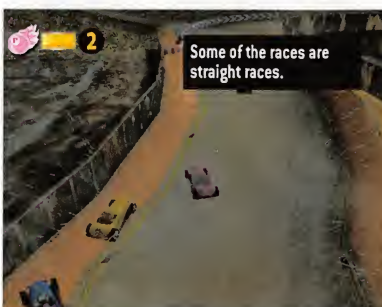
costs you a match it'll drive you insane with anger. Still, it's testament to the brilliance of the game that we get so heated up about the tiny flaws. It's only because it's so good that we get upset about the bad bits.

Ultimately, *Mashed* is a difficult game to put a mark to. If you have a Multitap and a strong supply of willing mates to indulge in endless sessions with, then there's little if anything on PlayStation2 to match *Mashed* for screaming, shouting, swearing fun. If you are a lone gamer – perhaps you live in Broken Hill or on a boat – with nothing but your own thumbs for company, this will be one of the shallowest, dullest and most frustrating gaming experiences you've

ever suffered. If you fall in the middle – plenty of friends but no Multitap – then you can expect a stunningly simple and hugely diverting battle but it might not permanently burn itself into your console.

There's no doubt that this is the best four-player game to make its way through our office. The only question is whether you have the friends and equipment to get the most out of it. If you do, then missing it is a crime punishable only by death. But if you can only play it solo then you really needn't bother.

/ MARK SORRELL



PSW VERDICT	
UPPERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Insanely addictive > Genuinely thrilling > Insanely addictive > CANT. STOP. PLAYING. 	DOWNERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Needs a Multitap > No, really > Single player is dull > Those stupid voices
GRAPHICS > Well designed and appealing	7
SOUNDS > Suitably meaty explosions	6
GAMEPLAY > Very nearly perfect multiplayer	8
OVERALL SCORE A truly great multiplayer game. When four are gathered together you'll have a hard time turning it off. Let down by a terrible single-player mode but that's not what it's really about. Superb.	
8	



SPIDERMAN 2

Spider-man, Spider-Man, does whatever a spider can. Spins a web any size, catches thieves just like flies... Hmmm, luckily, the game is better than the theme song!

> TYPE	ACTION
> PLAYERS	1
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	ACTIVISION
> DEVELOPER	TREYARCH
> ONLINE	NO

YOU CAN'T GET A BIGGER BOX OFFICE SMASH than the universally adored *Spider-Man 2*. Not only is it continuing to suck eager filmgoers in by the droves, but it's a much better film than the original and guaranteed to sell Spidey merchandise for years to come. The videogames are a natural extension of the *Spider-Man* experience, and we're delighted to report that this time around a serious effort has been made to provide fans with a true simulation of our favourite webhead and his sticky adventures (*His what? - Ed*). Tony Hawk developer, Treyarch, have abandoned their skateboards and taken to crawling, it seems.

ITSY BITSY SPIDER

One of the biggest thrills in both *Spider-Man* films is watching Spidey acrobatically web-sling his way across the cityscape, narrowly dodging traffic and flinging himself over buildings. Whilst the first *Spider-Man* game managed to capture the high altitude wall-crawling, you weren't able to go down to ground level. *Spider-Man 2* has rectified that flaw and given us a massive replica of New York City to run amok in. Perch atop the highest skyscraper and then dive off in true heroic fashion and plummet all the way to the ground, shooting out a web line just before you splatter all over the pavement. Swing down city streets pulling off Spider flips and somersaults, and even land on top of a passing car if you manage to time it right. Yep, *Spider-Man 2*

finally lets us truly live out our Spider-Man fantasies by giving us complete freedom and a fun set of superpowers to play with.

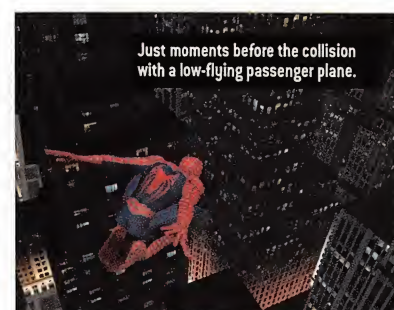
This huge city and the freedom you have to explore it from tip to toe as Spider-Man is *Spider-Man 2*'s greatest strength. It's been coined "Grand Theft Auto-ing" the game, but the player freedom to traverse the city is the only real point of comparison. *Spider-Man 2*'s combat, mission design and power-up system are nothing at all like the GTA games, and that's probably a good thing.

COOL CAT

Exploring the city will take you hours, days – if not weeks. There are hidden tokens to collect all over the joint, and more than a few sneaky temptations – like figuring out how to get yourself across the water to the Statue of Liberty. Whilst web-slinging your way about the place never seems to get dull, it doesn't take long to realise that the city really doesn't have anything in it, apart from the obvious mission trigger points and the random street crimes. It's just a big collection of buildings to play across, over and through.

You can initiate street missions by talking to pedestrians that have an icon above their head; these invariably involve stopping a stolen car, stopping an armoured car heist, saving a person from falling off a building and a few other petty crimes. Once you've done these missions more

than half-a-dozen times each (which you'll probably end up doing after only a few nights' play) you'll be well and truly over them. Annoyingly, you need to earn hero points in order to reveal the new story



HEY! YOU WEREN'T IN THE MOVIE!

Spider-Man 2 features a number of villains and characters that didn't feature in the blockbuster film. Aside from Doctor Octopus, you'll also come up against these ugly mugs...

Rhino	Mysterio	Shocker	Black Cat
This hulking bulk of muscle got his powers from exposure to radiation, and his polymer-armour skin is bonded to his flesh. Eww. Careful of the big horn on his head and his deadly dashing head-butt move.	Mysterio is a master of the mind, with powers of deception, hypnotism, holography and "psychological warfare". He also uses an array of gadgets and special effects to make his appearances all the more dramatic. A classic <i>Spider-Man</i> villain.	The Shocker uses a custom-built battle suit to deliver his electrically charged attacks. His vibro-shock units can rip apart cars - and poor Spider-Man is you're not careful! Make sure you use your Spidey sense!.	Okay, she's definitely not an ugly-mug. She's a thief, but a very charming one who might just be out to steal Spider-Man's heart more than anything. Pursuing her across the rooftops becomes quite a challenge.



"CONTROLLING SPIDERMAN IS A BLEND OF SUBLIME ACROBATICS AND FUN WEB-SLINGING MADNESS"

chapters, so replaying these repetitive street missions becomes a necessity and boredom quickly sets in. The good thing is that the actual story missions are varied, challenging and pretty good entertainment, so it's worth unlocking them. Not only does the game follow scenes from the movie, but you'll meet up with a host of other *Spider-Man* characters from the Marvel comic book, such as the cool Black Cat.

Controlling *Spider-Man* is a blend of sublime acrobatics and fun web-slinging madness mixed with intense frustration at the sweeping camera angles and the sometimes glitchy controls. One minute you'll be perfectly tracking a stolen car down a long city street and web-slinging flawlessly in pursuit, and the next you'll be smacking into the sides of buildings and figuring out which way is up, only to find you've lost your target by the time you

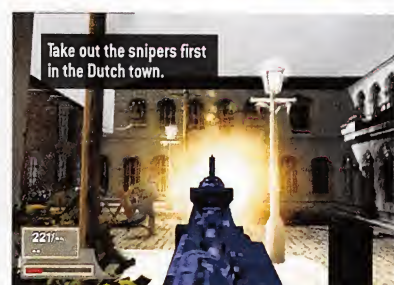
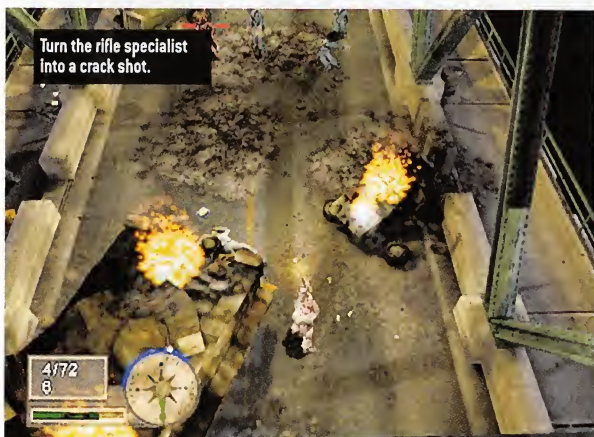
get your bearings. On the whole, the controls are passable, but you really have to be patient to learn exactly how to best master them and yet still put up with inconsistent responses to button presses. Just be prepared for regular disorientation. Spider-Man's powers can actually get better as the game progresses, as you can visit a variety of shops around the city and purchase power upgrades or new acrobatic moves. We've never really heard of a shop that sells powers to superheroes, but I guess we'll all have to suspend disbelief when it comes to this aspect of the game. Your web-slinging gets faster and Spidey becomes more adept at fighting foes and executing cool web-tricks. As the mobs get bigger and tougher, you'll begin to really appreciate your agile new moves. The Spidey sense is still intact too, allowing you to dodge attacks by the simple press of a button when

you see the flash around Spidey's head.

On the whole, *Spider-Man 2* is a fun title to mess about in. You'll waste countless hours exploring the city for tokens and trying to beat the time challenges and the story missions are fun and full of variety. The much hyped non-linear city missions are a bit of a let-down, however, and you'll tire of them very quickly indeed. It's not a perfect videogame, but it's probably the closest we'll get to being Spidey himself, so that's certainly nothing to sniff at. Cue theme song....

/ ELIOT FISH

PSW VERDICT	
> UPBERS > Spidey acrobatics > Huge city to explore > Authentic webslinging > Mission variety	> DOWNERS > Graphical glitches > Frustrating camera problems > Repetitive street missions > Long loading times
GRAPHICS > The big city is nice, but glitches spoil the fun	7
SOUNDS > The film star voice-acting is drab, little else of note	6
GAMEPLAY > Initially exciting but overly repetitive in the end	7
OVERALL SCORE Much better than the first <i>Spider-Man</i> game, but this sequel tries to drag a few good ideas over the course of an entire game and it wears a little thin. However, <i>Spider-Man 2</i> is still much better than your average neighbourhood movie-based game.	
7	



COMBAT ELITE: WWII PARATROOPERS

Dig out a dictionary, look up the word 'unforgiving' and you'll be part way to understanding the nature of this WWII-themed action-strategy game.



> TYPE	STRATEGY
> PLAYERS	1-2
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
> DEVELOPER	BATTLEBORNE
> ONLINE	NO

COMBAT ELITE IS QUITE POSSIBLY THE HARDEST game we've played in years. Hard enough to test the patience of a saint, in fact. If the old gal were still alive, we could even see Mother Teresa's legendary patience snapping in a fit of rage, with controller and PS2 paying a flying visit to the other side of the nunnery as a result. It really is that uncompromising.

We've seen quite a few of these tough-minded action-strategy games recently – *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance 2*, *Champions of Norrath* and *Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel* among them – but *Combat Elite* is the best yet. It isn't set in some made-up fantasy land with a stupid name, or a post-apocalyptic wasteland populated by renegade robots; the stage is WWII and the characters are fully believable as they put their

lives on the line in ear-shattering theatres of war.

The game is split into three arenas: D-Day, Operation Market Garden and the Battle for Bastogne. Normandy is the first port of call, with your paratrooper unit missing their drop zone by miles, landing deep in enemy territory. German patrols swarm the French countryside and machine gun emplacements and blockades have been set up everywhere. Like we said, it's not an easy introduction to the perils of war.

ONE MAN WAR

You'll need every ounce of concentration you can muster to survive. Even on the easiest of the three difficulty settings *Combat Elite* remains a bitch of a game. You certainly can't get away with running around spraying bullets at Nazis like it's

a jolly old game of paintball, especially given the lack of mid-mission saves to bail you out. To compensate for the erratic auto-aiming you've got to edge forward, ducking from one cover position to another in order to get as close to an enemy as possible. It's really a stealth game, but with the emphasis still on killing instead of painful-looking body-gymnastics.

The missions are only loosely squad-based, with two or more soldiers letting you take the lead and doing their best to keep up with you. Most of the time they'll wander into the path of a grenade you've just thrown or fail to take cover like the stupid, stupid idiots they are.

You can't give them orders and they don't even show up as dots on the radar, but fortunately there are only a few occasions when you have to protect them, which is a good thing, seeing as how it's hard enough keeping yourself alive at times. So, unless you're told specifically to protect them, it's best to ignore them altogether and concentrate on doing your own thing.

After a slow start in one too many wooded locations, *Combat Elite* picks up when Operation Market Garden begins. Here the action shifts to ruined towns occupied by the enemy and assaults on bridges held by German troops. The architecture and backdrops (or what's left of them) to the fighting are incredibly detailed and evoke a real sense of WWII realism. At times it's





THE GREAT ESCAPE

It's a typical combat situation, but how do you get out alive?



- 1 There's just no way you can cross No Man's Land. Stay put for now.
- 2 Fallen enemies leave plenty of ammo and health, so pick it all up.
- 3 Always make sure you're behind a solid object. Crouching helps too.
- 4 Blue indicates your enemies, while red shows you're being shot.
- 5 Lob a grenade over the top. They either won't notice or they'll flee.



Watch out for your own tank's friendly fire.



The only level where going in head-on works.



Explosions leave behind all sorts of goodies.



Your team always wait for you to take the lead.

"YOU CERTAINLY CAN'T GET AWAY WITH RUNNING AROUND SPRAYING BULLETS AT NAZIS LIKE IT'S A GAME OF PAINTBALL."

almost as if you've dropped onto the set of *The Eagle Has Landed*. It's a pity you can't flit in and out of more buildings, though one of the standout closing missions is set in an impressive Nazi stronghold.

BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER

There are variations on the hide-shoot-hide formula too. One of the bridge assaults is a full-frontal attack set against the clock to deactivate four bombs to enable your reinforcements to cross. Another is a timed mission that sees you crossing a minefield to destroy anti-aircraft guns before a fleet of Allied gliders arrive. Diversity also comes in the form of stationary guns and bazookas

with unlimited ammo that you can let rip on from a first-person perspective; tanks and snipers that must be cleared before you can progress through certain areas. And there are cut-scenes and scripted moments that often present new problems just when you think you've got the upper hand. The missions always feel different

even though the hard and fast rule of staying out of sight is a constant. Even the admittedly slim role-playing element has a bearing. Completing missions with squad mates alive, few hits taken and a high level of accuracy earns you promotions that in turn lead to points to spend on improving your soldier's abilities. Depending on whether you choose the rifle, heavy machinegun or hand-to-hand combat specialist at the start of the game you'll want to spend points on honing those skills. During the game you've got to make sure your character's primary weapon suits his area of expertise,

otherwise he'll struggle to hit anything. We pity anyone who chooses the hand-to-hand combat guy though, since it's almost impossible to sneak up on enemies.

The crazy level of difficulty won't be to everyone's taste. But for those seeking a slice of WWII action that's both intelligent and satisfying, look no further than *Combat Elite*. Just bear in mind that you'll need the patience of a saint to play successfully and bubble wrap to protect your PS2 controllers from rage attacks.

/ JONATHAN TODD

PSW VERDICT

> UPPERS

- > Very challenging
- > Nice period detail
- > Customise characters' skills
- > Exciting missions

> DOWNERS

- > Bags of patience needed
- > Auto-aiming is anything but
- > Thicko team-mates
- > View can't be zoomed

GRAPHICS > Tiny men fighting in detailed locations

7

SOUNDS > Thunderous explosions and dodgy accents

8

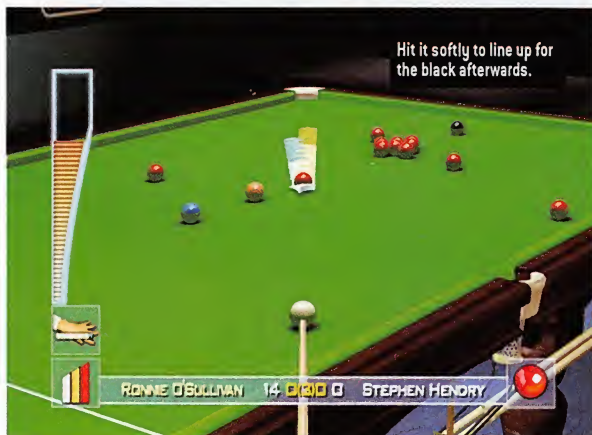
GAMEPLAY > Incredibly gratifying when you clear a level

8

OVERALL SCORE

Punishing yet strangely compelling, *Combat Elite* isn't a game for the easily frustrated. Bags of patience is required to progress – do so and you'll find it a deeply rewarding challenge.

8



WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2004

Fancy your chances against snooker legends Stephen Hendry, Ronnie O'Sullivan or, err, Steve Davis? Here's a game that brings the Crucible to your living room.

> TYPE	SPORTS
> PLAYERS	1-2
> OUT	JUNE
> PUBLISHER	CODEMASTERS
> DEVELOPER	BLADE
> ONLINE	YES

PETULANT TABLE-THUMPING, OBSCENE HAND gestures and a player who reportedly nipped off for a 'quickie' with his missus during the mid-session interval – the 2004 snooker World Championship finally shrugged off the game's image as a sport played by water-sipping dullards, and catapulted it into the 21st century. In future, we hope that players like current World Champ Ronnie O'Sullivan will be encouraged to show their passion for the game, even if it means making 'wanker' signs at the table.

World Championship Snooker 2004 captures

all that's great about snooker yet again. Whether you play with the aiming arrows fully extended or shortened, the controls feel so intuitive that within ten minutes you'll have knocked in a minimum break of 20. You could try potting with no aiming help whatsoever of course, but if it's an impossible challenge that you're after, then you might as well go to a real-life seedy snooker club and play on a full-sized table.

The potting line is no guarantee that you'll win a frame in one visit to the table, mind. It's great for recovery long pots and reckless fine cuts, but to knock in a break of 70 or 80 you need to apply spin to the white and judge the pace perfectly – just like the real thing. Using spin can affect the potting line by mere fractions and the angle of the cue butt also becomes relevant for certain shots. That's the appeal of this game: beginners can just use the natural potting angle to get position, while those who know one end of a cue from the other can manipulate the white ball with pinpoint precision.

POT THE RED AND SCREW BACK

The Career mode is fully up to date with all the major Pro Tour events included, climaxing in the Embassy World Championship at Sheffield's hallowed Crucible. You have an unlimited number of seasons to take the crown, which is just as well since the real pros featured in the game are

capable of knocking in a century from your break off shot. One feature, sadly absent, which we would like to have seen is a proper ranking system, where players who drop out of the top 16 are made to qualify for the Pro Tour events in poky local snooker halls.

As well as eight and nine-ball pool, and an updated Trick shot mode that now includes pool and snooker, there's also a new Classic Match mode that hands you the cue at a pivotal moment or frame score in each contest. The earliest clash is Joe Davis vs Fred Davis in 1940 and the most recent is last year's Ken Doherty vs Mark Williams final. The only match you *might* remember though, is the Steve Davis vs Dennis Taylor nail-biter from the 1985 final.

A few two-player mini-games are also worth a



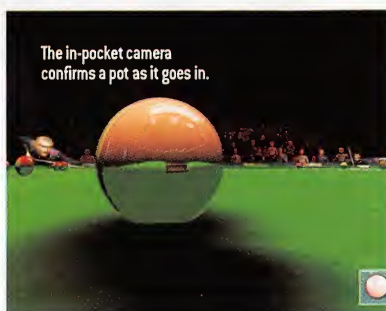


Smash 'em up on the break and hope one goes down.

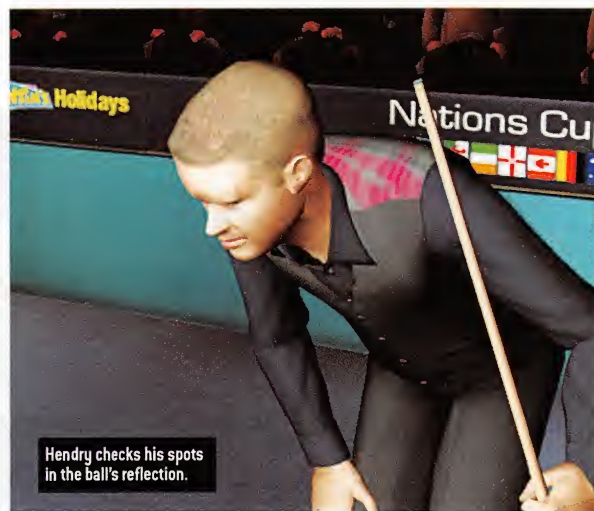
REPLAY



You've got to be in it to win it.



The in-pocket camera confirms a pot as it goes in.



Hendry checks his spots in the ball's reflection.



The break-off shot is key against good opponents.

look when you get tired of slogging through a normal frame. 'Time Bandits' gives each player a set amount of time to score as many points as possible with pots taking seconds off the other player. 'Bonus Ball' follows this same rule but with a nominated colour scoring ten extra points. Finally, 'In My Pocket' is a highly tactical game in which you must block your opponent's pockets by potting balls in them. Head-to-head online games are also available for those 'hooked up'.

IS THAT A SNOOKER CUE IN YOUR POCKET?

What lets the game down is pretty much the same thing as the 2003 version. Despite capturing each pro's unique quirks, the accuracy of the player models is a bit hit-and-miss and the wobbly animation makes them look like old men struggling to bend over to play shots. The commentary from John Virgo and Dennis Taylor is equally iffy, lacking in chemistry and

occasionally offering some eccentric shot advice. Since the match presentation is a carbon copy of the BBC's snooker coverage, Taylor's useful shot prediction lines are missed here.

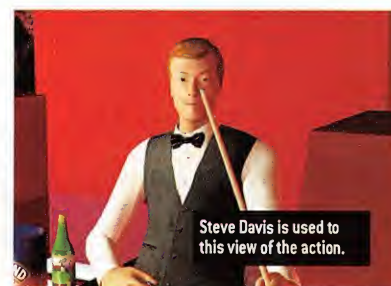
Most disappointing of all though is the artificial intelligence, which is still too predictable and mechanical. Opponents are divided into easy, medium and hard ratings and it's these that determine how high a break they make – not how difficult a particular pot might be. No matter how easy their next shot, bog-standard players always break down before they reach 30 and middling players rarely get more than 50 points. Considering all the players, both real and fictional, are supposed to be pros this isn't very realistic and takes some of the shine off the single-player career game.

Still, *World Championship Snooker 2004* remains an essential game for fans of the green baize. Put simply, you won't find a better snooker

"CONTROLS FEEL SO INTUITIVE THAT WITHIN TEN MINUTES YOU'LL HAVE KNOCKED IN A MINIMUM BREAK OF 20."

or pool simulation out there. Forget the fantasy locations of *Jimmy White's Cueball World* and *Pool Paradise* – a normal table in a feasible setting is all you need. The ball physics and control system have always been this game's strongest point and now they're backed up with a huge range of game modes and options.

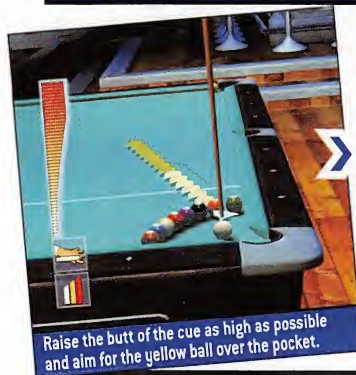
/ JONATHAN TODD



Steve Davis is used to this view of the action.

TRICK SHOT MASTER

Trying outrageous shots improves your ball control and helps to make you a better player.



Raise the butt of the cue as high as possible and aim for the yellow ball over the pocket.



Striking the ball with full power causes the white to jump. But is it on target for the pocket?



Yes, it is! As long as you clip the outside of the yellow the white shouldn't follow it down.

PSW VERDICT

- UPPERS
 - All the major tournaments
 - Simple, intuitive controls
 - Loads of game modes
 - Option to play pool
- DOWNERS
 - Slack player animation
 - AI feels too calculated
 - Not many pool games
 - Short Career mode

GRAPHICS > Weird puppet players and nice shiny balls

SOUNDS > Authentic sounds, unhelpful commentary

GAMEPLAY > Excellent ball physics and game modes

OVERALL SCORE

Simple, intuitive and rampantly playable, *World Championship Snooker 2004* comes closer to the real sport than any other video game to date. Player animation and AI could be better, though.

7



MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 3

The latest way to make music on your PS2 is slicker and smarter. If God really is a DJ, can *MTV Music Generator 3* turn you into God?



> TYPE MUSIC
> PLAYERS 1
> OUT NOW
> PUBLISHER CODEMASTERS
> DEVELOPER CODEMASTERS
> ONLINE NO

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR ISN'T A GAME. IT'S A

way of taking tunes you already know and retooling them, refitting them and generally re-mixing them. Or, if you prefer, you can create tracks from scratch, using the bits and pieces sampled from the songs included. As such, it's a nice change from hacking, shooting and driving, but is it really worth breaking into your hard-earned savings for?

Well, yes. *MTV Music Generator 3* sets its sights fairly low and manages to do everything it wants to. By avoiding all the heavyweight,

hardcore tune-making stuff and concentrating instead on easy-to-assemble music, it might just pull in those of you who always got lumped with the triangle in music class and still managed to sound out of tune and out of time.

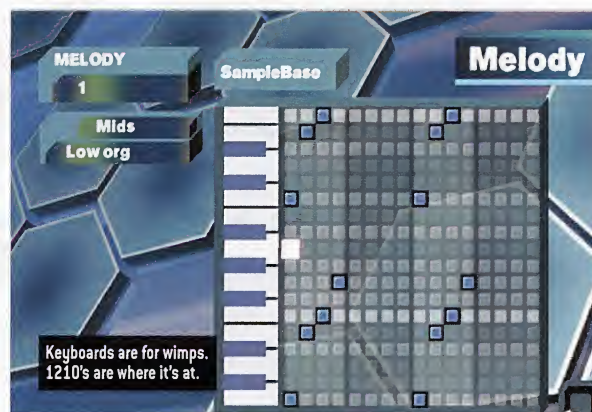
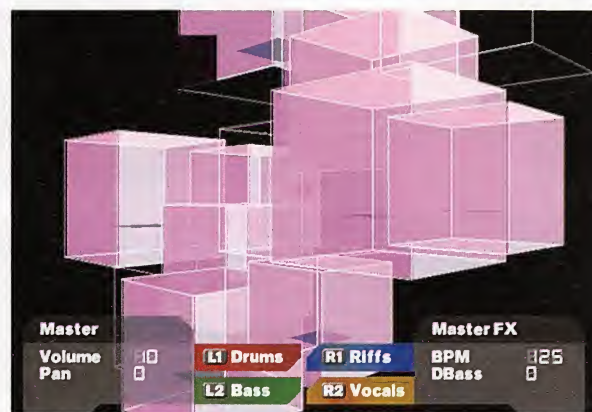
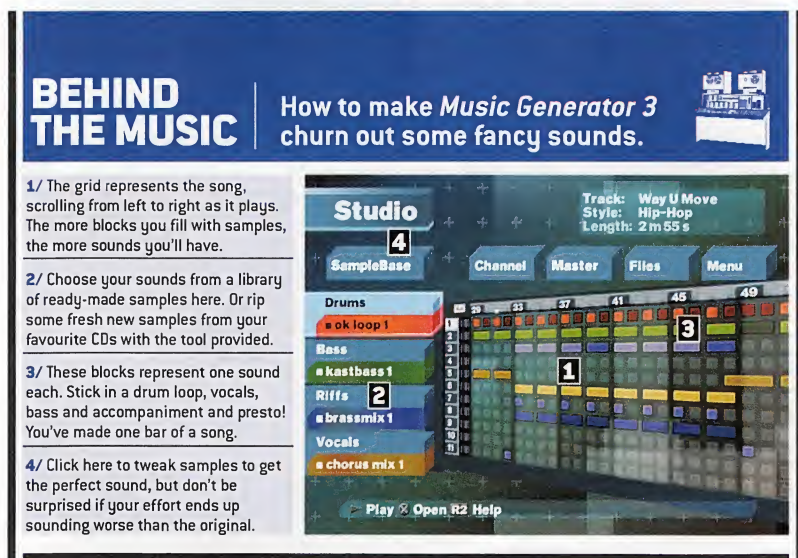
ABSOLUTELY FLAWLESS?

Like its predecessors, *Music Generator 3* tries to strip away everything that stands between you and the creation of listenable music, short of actually making it for you. So the selection of samples all fit together in a way that would make

Ikea shoppers envious. In fact, there's something pleasingly Lego-like about the set-up. You can make music simply by choosing a beat, a bassline, some vocals and accompaniment — whatever you choose from the approved list will sound good. The one major problem is that since you know all the samples from one particular song type are made to fit together, you haven't actually created anything new — you've just rearranged different parts from the same kit.

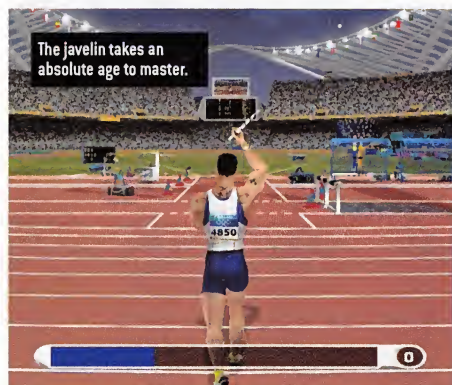
Ten tracks are included to mess about with, all mixed down into their component parts and buffed up with a ton of alternative samples just ripe for the remixing. Snoop Dogg's *From Tha Church To Da Palace* is the hip hop highlight, and for fans of Dance Hall Lite™ the ubiquitous Sean Paul makes an appearance too. Most of the tracks are worthy in their way, but we can't see anyone spending that long taking apart The Ones' *Flawless* for that long. There's a bit of Carl Cox too, because you can't really have a music creation title without Carl Cox showing up. This time it's the track *Katja*, a straightforward pounding bit of house. Fabulous adds a bit of





"MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 3 STRIPS AWAY EVERYTHING THAT STANDS BETWEEN YOU AND THE CREATION OF LISTENABLE MUSIC."

PSW VERDICT		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UPPERS Nice tunes Sophisticated looks Easy to get to grips with Makes you funky 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOWNERS Limited in scope Needs more songs? Sampler is basic Pros will laugh at you 	
GRAPHICS	Smart interface, schlocky visual effects	6
SOUNDS	Needs more songs, but they're good choices	8
GAMEPLAY	Easy to make music – in a handful of styles	7
OVERALL SCORE <i>MTV Music Generator 3</i> walks the fine line between technical complexity and 'my first music maker' redundancy. And it does it very well, too. New beatsmiths should give it a try.		7



ATHENS 2004

Swim, shoot and stumble around like a injured lamb in front of the whole world, dressed only in your Speedos.



> TYPE	SPORTS
> PLAYERS	1-4
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	SONY
> DEVELOPER	EUROCOM
> ONLINE	NO

EVERYBODY HAS A FAVOURITE EVENT IN THE Olympics. Men opt for the more masculine events like weightlifting and skeet shooting, spliced with a little female gymnastic eye-candy. Track events don't usually have quite the same appeal, what with their bland commentary and lingering close-ups of skinny beanpoles with bad skin.

Previous attempts to make a licensed game out of the Olympics have fallen flat. Without exception, every game has used the old button-bashing control method that first appeared in Konami's *Track and Field* arcade classic some twenty years ago. If racing games were stuck in the same rut, there would be no power sliding, no gear changing, no broken bonnets and no rear view mirror. Thank the Lord that Sony has bothered to reinvent the wheel and given us a genuinely new take on the Olympics.

Athens 2004 features all 25 events and, surprisingly, they're all entertaining. Even

traditionally boring track events become much more than just a button-bashing race to the finish. The novel first-person viewpoint allows you to weave between rivals as if playing *Gran Turismo* and requires skill as well as finger strength to succeed in. Likewise, gymnastic challenges mimic the control method seen in *Dance Dance Revolution* and even allow you to hook up a dance mat. In fact, the dance mat can be used in all events to replace button-bashing with foot-stomping.

Alongside track events, there's brilliant renditions of archery and skeet shooting, with accurate physics and painfully good opposition. Each event includes a Practice mode so you can get to grips with the nuances of the event. During archery practice, for example, you'll learn that it becomes harder to aim as time elapses because your field of vision narrows as the tension builds. The pacing of skill based events is spot on and away from the exhausting weightlifting challenges you're rarely at risk of RSI (the weightlifting tortures players with three tiers of pain via sustained button-bashing).

It's unlikely that any event will be mastered first time around and that's what gives *Athens 2004* depth. It's fun enough mastering the easier events, but facing each event in succession requires determination and lots of practice.

The minor gripes we have with *Athens 2004* are that there's little footage or photos of real athletes to fire up your Olympic passions with, and you get the feeling that, while innovative,

Sony could have pushed the envelope a little further in terms of gameplay. The dance mat is a great addition but why couldn't the EyeToy have been an option for the discus or javelin events?

As a single-player game, *Athens 2004* has a huge amount of depth and, better still, an unexpectedly addictive streak, which demands that you get a gold medal on every event. Leaving with a silver feels like failure and it's testament to the learning curve of each event that gaining a gold medal always feels achievable rather than a distant dream.

Athens 2004 is ideal for sports fans and would make a good multiplayer game too. What with this and *Mashed* arriving at the same time, it looks like a Multitap is all set to become this year's essential PS2 accessory.

/ RICHARD MELVILLE



PSW VERDICT		
> UPBERS		> DOWNERS
Great visuals		Lack of real stars
All the events		Bland commentary
Dance mat compatible!		The official mascot
Mix of game styles		No online play
GRAPHICS	Crisp, lifelike beanpoles	6
SOUNDS	Accurate grunts and pistol shots	7
GAMEPLAY	Innovate and addictive	8
OVERALL SCORE		
A highly polished jaunt through the Olympics with an emphasis on competition and fun. Addictive events and varied gameplay ensure that you'll be playing long after the real Olympics are over.		
		7



SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN

The world is under threat from a mystery virus. The dead could well be the lucky ones.

> TYPE	SHOOTING
> PLAYERS	1-2
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	SONY
> DEVELOPER	SONY
> ONLINE	YES

SYPHON FILTER WAS A BIT OF A SLEEPER HIT ON PSone. It looked a little rough around the edges, but it surprised us all by being a lot of fun. Our impression of its first outing on PS2 is almost the polar opposite. With its accomplished heritage we had rather high expectations. Sadly where the original was a 'sleeper hit' this is more like a 'pile of...', if you catch our drift.

It's all downhill from the minute you get lost in the over elaborate menu screen. From there it's just a short hop into gaming hell. Step into the tutorial and prepare to be astounded at just how frustrating a game can be. Your first few minutes will be spent labouring with the controls simply to stop your character from smacking headfirst into walls at every opportunity. It's clumsy and infuriating, and you'll want to throw your pad at the wall before long.

Step gingerly into the missions and prepare to be amazed at the seemingly unending list of

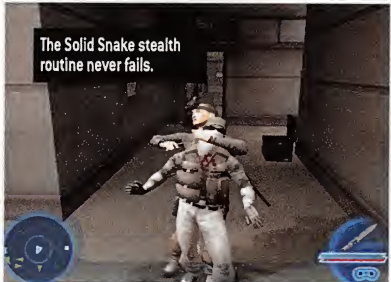
calamitous cock-ups that make *Syphon Filter* one of the most unpleasant games we've had to endure for some time. Every time you die your character re-spawns but the level doesn't. This means that everything you've achieved and every mistake you've made remains. Basically, you can plough through dying every few seconds and still complete each mission. Conversely if you want to atone for your mistakes and unlock some of the bonuses on offer by putting in a good performance you'll have to quit out and restart the entire game every time you muck things up. Where's the logic in that?

Objectives are so unclear you'll spend ages bumbling about, killing everything that moves, dying lots, getting frustrated, very annoyed and not having much fun at all. Apparently the world is under threat from some mysterious virus and as a member of an elite unit it's up to you and your squad to save the planet. It would be a

serious situation if it wasn't for the fact that your superiors dish out orders with some of the worst voice acting on PS2. It's all so over-the-top and blatantly D-list that it'll have you wondering if this is all some sort of gaming parody. But no. It's all sadly very real and comes very close to making us want to rip open our PS2 with a crowbar, yank the game disc from within its innards and shatter it with a hammer.

Syphon Filter offers co-operative online play, where two players can combine their efforts in a show of worldwide camaraderie to beat the evil bug. However, when the game is so disappointing in every possible way, there's a good chance that you won't actually be able to find anyone else online to team up with. You won't find us there.

/ MIKEY FOLEY



PSW VERDICT	
UPPERS	DOWNERS
Wide selection of weapons	Terribly voice acting
Lots of unlockable bonuses	Appalling controls
Online co-op play	Clumsy movement
You can switch it off	Unclear objectives
GRAPHICS	Terrible character animation
SOUNDS	Some of the worst voice acting on PS2
GAMEPLAY	Everything seems aimed at pure frustration
OVERALL SCORE	
Totally frustrating and just plain broken in places. We loved the PSone original – despite its ugly trousers – because it played superbly. We'd choose that over this PS2 update any day.	
	3

MINI REVIEWS

Not all games can be as good as *Vice City*, or as painfully bad as *Space Invaders: Invasion Day*. Most sit somewhere in the middle...



.HACK MUTATION

No, it's not the game we reviewed a few issues ago. It's new. Honest.

> TYPE	ADVENTURE
> PLAYERS	1
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	ATARI
> DEVELOPER	BANDAI
> ONLINE	NO

WHEN A SEQUEL TURNS UP ON OUR DESKS ONLY

three months after the original game, we can't but help take a step back, inhale deeply and cynically stroke our chin. We've already reviewed this, right? How could a sequel be required so soon? What could possibly be so different? Well, the answers are no, don't know and not much. There are actually four *.Hack* games queuing up to assault the shelves of your local game store and this is the second instalment. Furthering the story of 'The World' – a game within a game – the plot has already reached the point of bewildering complexity. There's an accompanying anime DVD with the game which is supposed to make it all crystal clear. To be honest though, it only served to confuse us even more.

This is a simulated online adventure game. You log on to virtual servers and fight your way through randomly created dungeons building up your character's abilities. There are towns to make friends in and trade items with, plus a huge and vaguely sinister conspiracy to uncover. That's pretty much it though. Gameplay is oversimplified, but the plot is convoluted.

If you haven't already played and enjoyed the original *.Hack Infection*, then avoid this like an oncoming truck of boredom. This is a game strictly for those already well versed in the ways of the *.Hack* universe and makes few concessions to newbies. Veterans of the first game however will be able to load up their characters from *.Hack Infection* and get straight back into the action, no doubt revelling in the addition of a few new dungeon types, items and party members.

/ MARK SORRELL

PSW VERDICT

OVERALL SCORE

This is a game made absolutely exclusively for fans of the first title. If you haven't experienced *.Hack Infection* then don't even consider going near *.Hack Mutation*.

5



RISK

It's the classic board game on PlayStation2. No more, no less.

> TYPE	STRATEGY
> PLAYERS	1-6
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	ATARI
> DEVELOPER	CYBERLORE
> ONLINE	YES

THERE ARE SOME VERY SAD PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.

They really want a nice game of *Risk* but don't have anyone to play against. This game is for them. It's a direct port of the board game, spruced up with a little extra animation and PS2-controlled players represented by some of the great tactical minds from history. So, if you fancy pitting your wits against video game versions of Catherine the Great or George Washington, seek help immediately. And maybe get *Risk*.

Aside from the PS2-controlled players, there's also a multiplayer option, with the chance to take on up to five friends for a lengthy tactical face off. If you don't have any friends to hand you can take your PS2 online and compete against whoever you find hanging about on the internet, itching for an intense six-hour strategic duel.

The game itself is simple. It's played on a map of the world that's split into smaller regions, the aim being to control the entire map. Each area you control holds a number of armies and you must use those armies to attack enemy areas. Combat is decided by combining a dice roll and the number of armies committed to the battle. The more area you hold, the faster your army grows until eventually – hopefully – you rule the world with an iron fist.

Still, the game plays no differently to the original board game that's almost certainly languishing in your parent's shed. Whether that's a good thing or not is entirely down to whether you like the original, however we think there are rather more impressive things to be getting up to on your PlayStation2.

/ MARK SORRELL

PSW VERDICT

OVERALL SCORE

It's a faithful reproduction of the ancient board game but little more. The convenience of having PS2-controlled players available is something for the *Risk* fanatic alone.

5



NAVAL OPS: COMMANDER

Take to the high seas and control a fleet of floating death machines.

> TYPE	STRATEGY
> PLAYERS	1
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	KOEI
> DEVELOPER	KOEI
> ONLINE	NO

FOLLOWING ON FROM 2003'S WARSHIP GUNNER,

Naval Ops: Commander is part watered-down (heh, heh...) real-time strategy shooter and part fantasy battleship-building sim. It's set in an alternate reality where 9mm canons and sea-skimming patrol vessels sit happily alongside plasma guns and massive, twin-hulled battleships that look more like spaceships than boats.

You're placed in charge of a lonesome battle group fighting a rearguard action against the all-conquering armada of the evil Virshia Empire. Gameplay is neatly split between combat missions and dry-dock ship building. For blowing enemy ships out of the water and passing missions you're rewarded with funds that can be used to develop your very own 'supership' with. The ship creation and development side of things seems baffling at first but stick with it and all is gradually explained. With over 200 types of weapon and 1000 individual add-ons, there are enough customisation options to keep dedicated boat-builders happy for some time. Of course, you'd be forgiven for thinking that building ships is a bit of a dull way to spend your time, but it's actually quite satisfying. Especially after you've created a double-hulled nuclear-powered, plasma laser-equipped superboat that your enemy won't be able to get anywhere near without being zapped straight out of the water.

Departing from the mostly fixed third-person view of its predecessor, *Commander* lets you loose with an overhead camera that can be zoomed and moved around the screen as you wish. Shame the graphics are bland enough to make you sea-sick mind. Otherwise, not bad.

/ AUDLEY JARVIS

PSW VERDICT

OVERALL SCORE

An unusual mix of water-based real-time strategy, shooting and ship-building. Should probably be awful, but somehow isn't. Shame about those graphics though.

7

MINI REVIEWS



THE X-FILES: RESIST OR SERVE

Finding anyone who's still interested in the show is a tough case to crack.

> TYPE	SURVIVAL HORROR
> PLAYERS	1
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	VIVENDI
> DEVELOPER	BLACK OPS
> ONLINE	NO

'JUMPING THE SHARK' IS THAT DEFINING MOMENT

when a TV show goes downhill, named after the *Happy Days* episode when Fonzie overcomes his fear of sharks by jumping over one while wearing water skis.

The *X-Files* had quite a few jumping the shark moments before the plug was pulled: the so-so movie, David Duchovny leaving, the confusing black alien oil, the cop-out resolution to Mulder's sister's abduction, that bloke from *Terminator 2* as Scully's new partner – the series definitely went on a season or two too long. But, of course, now it's gone we kinda miss it.

Fortunately *Resist or Serve* takes you back to the show's heyday. Mulder is still the dry, witty obsessive and Scully is ever the sceptic. There are cameos from Skinner, the Lone Gunmen, Krycek and the Smoking Man. Everywhere you look there are references to past episode titles, significant names and numbers and even Mulder's porn collection. The game is divided into episodes too, complete with the credits and that spooky theme tune.

So for *X-Files* fans it's the closest they'll get to seeing a new episode of the show. For everyone else, the game is a blatant rip-off of *Resident Evil 2*. Mulder and Scully are quickly separated and their hackneyed individual adventures consist of blasting zombies and scouring the screen for twinkling items.

Worse still, the game is plagued by botched aiming and a camera that leaves enemies off-screen and constantly changes angle. The animation of the two leads is poor and Mulder is so glass-eyed he looks like the black oil has possessed him. This should've been better.

/ JONATHAN TODD

PSW VERDICT

OVERALL SCORE

Maybe if they'd tried copying *Silent Hill* instead of *Resident Evil* then things would have been better. After all, zombies were hardly a staple of the TV show, were they?

5



POWERDROME

Intensely fast futuristic racing without weapons that fails to raise our pulse.

> TYPE	RACING
> PLAYERS	1-4
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	EVOLVED
> DEVELOPER	ARGONAUT
> ONLINE	NO

NO WEAPONS, NO POWER-UPS LYING ON THE TRACK,

nothing. *Powerdrome* is an intentional throwback to the original 1988 Amiga and Atari ST fave – a game that's widely recognised as the forerunner for *Wipeout* and *Twisted Metal*.

Yet at first it feels completely alien. You're so used to collecting weapons or driving over a certain part of the track to gain a speed boost that relying on your own driving skills and nothing else to win a race seems almost unnatural. It's hard too, and takes a lot of perseverance before you feel like you're making any progress.

You can help your cause by not bumping into the barriers that fence in the very narrow tracks. Go for some distance without scraping the paintwork and you fill a speed turbo bar that gives you one short boost before resetting. Next to this is the damage meter that tells you when you should use a limited instant repair.

The tracks are varied and a few even open out into wider lanes with potential for shortcuts. These tracks are ideal for split-screen multiplayer races, but the absence of weapons or power-ups makes battling a friend less fun than in, say, the *Wipeout* games.

It's futuristic racing at its purest, but that doesn't necessarily make it a great game. The graphics are underwhelming and the voice of your character reacting to every bump merely grates on the ears, rather than its intended function to help you find the perfect racing line. And those damned PS2 controlled drivers almost never make mistakes, so it's a really tough game to crack. We thought the future would be better than this.

/ JONATHAN TODD

PSW VERDICT

OVERALL SCORE

Without the power-ups and weapons of similar futuristic racer *Wipeout*, *Powerdrome* comes across as rather dull. It's plenty fast, but not a whole lot of fun.

5



HARRY POTTER PRISONER OF AZKABAN

Mr Potter returns for a third term, but shows little sign of maturing.

> TYPE	ACTION ADVENTURE
> PLAYERS	1-4
> OUT	NOW
> PUBLISHER	EA
> DEVELOPER	EA
> ONLINE	NO

HARRY, RON AND HERMIONE MIGHT BE ALL GROWN

up and looking almost legal in the new movie, but *The Prisoner of Azkaban* remains rooted in kiddie-game hell.

You only have to take a bus on a morning to see Sydney's overworked, underpaid masses with their heads buried in the pages of a J. K. Rowling yarn to realise there are just as many adults as there are kids who can't get enough boy-wizardry in their sad, empty lives.

They, and the more discerning youngsters, deserve something far more challenging than what we have here. Cut-scenes almost outweigh actual gameplay, and what gameplay there is revolves around pressing the correct button at the on-screen prompt to do something. Just in case you fail to work this out, Ron the ginger twat chirps in with patronising advice. It's a shame you can't turn him into a frog and stomp on his head. That *would* be fun.

It's an extremely well-made game though. Hogwarts is beautifully recreated and younger players will have a ball running around the corridors, speaking to pupils and searching for all the bonus content. This time you can play as all three lead characters, and to solve puzzles you'll have to switch between them or use them to work together. Harry has a new grapple spell for swinging between platforms, Ron can find hidden doors and Hermione is small enough to fit through narrow gaps.

It's also one of the first non-Karaoke/dancing games to take advantage of the EyeToy gizmo. There are four mini-games for up to four players, but unless you're the same age as Potter and the gang, you'll find them even more kiddified than the main game.

/ JONATHAN TODD

PSW VERDICT

OVERALL SCORE

Completely redundant for anyone over the age of 11, but the simple challenges and short length won't bother the young 'uns. A big, fat, giant hit in the charts no doubt.

6



SCHOOL OF ROCK

Jack's back (in black). Are you ready to worship at the altar of rock?

Starring Jack Black Director Richard Linklater Year 2003 Released 12 July

Fuse three hip, indie mavericks for a heavy-metal high-school movie about screw-the-system rebellion and what do you get? If with instruments? Bully with bass desires? Nope. The spawn of quirky scripter Mike White (*Chuck & Buck*), slacker auteur Richard Linklater (*Waking Life*) and Tazmanian devil Jack Black (*High Fidelity*) emerges as a feet-first polar opposite: an affectionate, conventional and purely entertaining family flick. Which is no bad thing.

Black is Dewey Finn, a thirty-something rocker whose guitar-god ambitions bellyflop when his bandmates ditch him. Behind on his rent, desperate for easy cash, Dewey blags his way into the job of a 5th-grade substitute teacher at a preppie private school. Not that he has any intention of teaching them algebra, mind: the Battle of the Bands is in six weeks' time. Six weeks to teach his young charges the world-spinning power of rock while turning them into a hardcore group. Well, scratch 'hardcore'. Because Black's "stick it to The Man" revolution comes rubber-stamped PG – no sex, no drugs, just good ol' rock'n'roll. But if his lewder, tastier snap has been muzzled, the Tenacious D wildman compensates by amping the gurning super-schtick to 11, his frenetic, whirlwind performance giving anarchic fizz to a pretty bland blueprint.

"I've touched your kids," Dewey innocently tells the nippers' well-to-do parents. "And I'm pretty sure they've touched me." Truth is, the twanging zingers don't get that good that often, but White's script is funny and smart enough to strike all the mainstream power-chords in a manner that The Darkness would envy. These characters aren't dazed and confused, they're a roll-call of stereotypes and class caricatures – Geek, Dude, Fatty, Bossy, Camp – right up to Joan Cusack's ramrod principle who needs to get back in touch with her inner rock-chick. And you know what? It doesn't matter a bit. Because *School Of Rock* loves them with honest conviction, making it okay for us to love 'em as well. If you like good music, take a good look at Jack Black flying solo and wonder where he'll end up next. We're pretty sure he's joined Hollywood for good.

EXTRAS Mr Black forms the showboat centre of the bonus material but the kids get a video diary of their own – morning 'til night on the day of the movie's premiere at the Toronto Film Festival. Bless.

VERDICT Loud and likeable, this formula-farce won't rock your world – but it will make it a funnier place to be for a couple of hours.

★★★★★ Jonathan Crocker



ALEX AND EMMA

Released 12 July Year 2003
Director Rob Reiner Starring Kate Hudson

Rob Reiner was once a great director. Then came *North*, *The Story Of Us* and, sorry to say, *Alex And Emma*. Luke Wilson's a writer who has 30 days to finish a novel before mobsters remove his kneecaps over gambling debts. Kate Hudson is the secretary he hires to type it out. Both of them also play characters in the novel itself (half the film is set in the '30s world of the book), but the main plot centres around – guess what? – the pair falling in love. With some lazy performances, zero chemistry and very few laughs, this tired rom-com makes for half-hearted, predictable schlock. *Spinal Tap* seems a very long time ago...

EXTRAS You have to worry when the commentary (a freewheeling, ad-libbed affair courtesy of Reiner and Wilson) is funnier than the film.

VERDICT Lacking character and full of hideous clichés, without an ounce of genuine laughter.

★★★★★ Ceri Thomas

POLICE ACADEMY 20TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION

Released Out now Director Hugh Wilson Year 1984
Starring Steve Guttenberg

Nostalgic pub conversation No291: "Remember *Police Academy*? The first one? Ah, that was great..." Well it wasn't, actually. Unlike your *Animal Houses* or *Cannonball Runs* (sphincter-clenching racist moments aside), this '80s screwball crumbles under 21st-century scrutiny. Despite its flimsy 'equal opportunity' message – positing that any





COLD MOUNTAIN

Love and war courtesy of Zellweger and Law.

Released 19th July Director Anthony Mingella Starring Jude Law Year 2003

More surface sheen than sturdy substance, Anthony Minghella's pricey adap of Charles Frazier's bestseller attempts to juggle the intimate (Jude'n'Nicole's amorous yearnings) with the epic (the US Civil War). It's got a mouth-watering cast, gorgeous visuals and there's a bloody great explosion near the beginning along with Saving Private Ryan levels of gore. So what's the problem? Call it the Miramax factor, that prestige-pic polish that lets impeccable taste win over a full, gritty flavour. Shame too, that with all the other fine thesping on offer (Natalie Portman's forlorn war widow; sinful preacher Philip Seymour Hoffman), the Oscar went to Renée Zellweger's cute-but-caricatured turn as rogh-diamond farmgirl Ruby.

EXTRAS Main doc Climbing Cold Mountain plus a musical critique by, um, Sting.

VERDICT A hard hitting mix of war, romance and, occasionally, country bumpkin comedy courtesy of Zellweger.

★★★★★ Matthew Leyland

loser can become a copper – it still has racist moments, but far fewer laughs. Steve Guttenberg apparently believes that comedy acting is all about flaring your nostrils, while quips like, "You and the wife do it doggie-style or what?" are the nearest the script gets to punchlines. Avoid the complete box set too.

EXTRAS Only a talking-head documentary and shambolic commentary, but both prove entertaining. The insistence of the doc participants on recalling events that happened to their characters as if it happened to them is endearing. The group commentary, meanwhile, is so slapdash – the director joins in late and one actor leaves early – that it raises more laughs than the movie itself.

VERDICT Only George Gaynes' commandant retains any tickle-power, his podium blow-job scene being the sole smile-cracker. Hardly enough to warrant a purchase, though, is it?

★★★★★ Dan Jolin

THE HAUNTED MANSION

Released Out Now Starring Eddie Murphy Director Rob Minkoff Year 2003

Happy Meal horror, this: cheap, gaudily coloured and lacking in nourishment. The premise is so small you could dissolve it in your Coke (Eddie Murphy and family get trapped in a haunted house). The characters are made from the same cardboard as your fries. And the plotline? Well, there's more meat (but less cheese) in a cheeseburger.

Murphy, meanwhile, appears to have finally given up the ghost. Watching him stumble through *The Haunted Mansion* is as tragically comic as watching a formerly great heavyweight boxer trip on his catheter tube and fall into a bath filled with custard. Our advice? Stick to voicing cartoon characters.

EXTRAS Two commentaries, a special effects featurette and an in-depth scene analysis, all seemingly designed to bore

children to tears. More appropriate are the virtual ride through the mansion and some – gasp! – amusing Murphy outtakes.

VERDICT Bland horror yarn that manages to make *Scooby Doo 2* look like a substantial slab of kid pleasing genius.

★★★★★ Jon Brown

HELEN OF TROY

Released Out now Director Robert Wise Year 1956 Starring Rossana Podesta

If you really can't wait for the coming slew of post-*Gladiator* sword-and-sandal romps to arrive, Robert Wise's 1956 take on the woman who men went to war over shows how they used to do it. Sadly, the cast see to it that it's no *Ben-Hur*: Rossana Podesta and Stanley Baker are as wooden as the Trojan horse, although it's fitting that Baker plays Achilles, as in "heel". Still, they were probably hired on the cheap to leave enough dosh for that bloody great wooden horse and the mega blood-stained sword clashes – with a budget of \$6 million, this was costly for its day.

EXTRAS There are three archive Behind The Cameras featurettes, focusing on the look, sound and the casting of the film.

VERDICT For bombast, melodrama and historical interest it's worth a look, but you have to stomach an awful lot of stiff enunciating.

★★★★★ Kevin Harley

COMING HOME

Released 7 June Director Hal Ashby Starring Jane Fonda Year 1978

Rumour has it that *Coming Home* almost stole *The Deer Hunter*'s Best Picture Oscar, last-minute voters opting for 1978's 'other' Vietnam picture when it

was discovered Michael Cimino's favourite had fabricated its Russian roulette scenes. A terrifically acted but rather clumsy prod at America's post-'Nam guilt, Hal Ashby's message movie sees Jane Fonda's nurse fall for Jon Voight's paraplegic vet while gung-ho hubby Bruce Dern is off killing Charlie. There's no doubting the good intentions, but his exploratory fumbblings now seem simplistic, his sentiment unbridled.

EXTRAS Just a trailer.

VERDICT Worth seeing for Jane and Jon's Oscar-winning performances and a cracking love scene – tender, moving and erotic.

★★★★★ Jamie Graham

SPARTACUS:

TWO-DISC SPECIAL EDITION

Released 24 May Director Stanley Kubrick Starring Kirk Douglas Year 1960

The film that *Gladiator* wants to be when it grows up, *Spartacus* is everything a Hollywood epic should be... And a whole lot more besides. Getting the gloss and the glitz down pat, a young Stanley Kubrick was gifted with Kirk Douglas and a starry supporting cast, plus plenty of opportunity to deliver jaw-dropping action scenes. What makes *Spartacus* one of the greats is the fact it has heart and brains to go with its brawn. A gripping film about a crumbling empire, about revolutionary fervour and the priceless value of love and loyalty.

EXTRAS Loaded with everything you could ever want, although the film is sadly split over two discs.

VERDICT Nouveau-epics like *Troy* and *Alexander* have a lot to live up to. Let's all chant: "I'm Spartacus..."

★★★★★ Ceri Thomas



THE HARD WORD

Released Out Now
Director Scott Roberts Starring Guy Pearce Year 2003

A messily schizophrenic, low-rent Aussie crime movie, *The Hard Word* borrows from all the usual suspects (Tarantino, Guy Ritchie) as it flits between black comedy and vicious bloodbath. Boasting the worst false nose since *Fagin*, Guy Pearce is the eldest of a trio of thieving brothers, fresh out of jail and forced into One Last Job. Pearce and Rachel Griffiths (as his treacherous wife) do their best to keep things steady, but the sudden lurches in tone and the increasingly ridiculous twists leave you clutching your head to alleviate the giddiness.

EXTRAS Dodgy movie, solid extras, including an isolated music score, storyboards, behind-the-scenes footage and even a glossary of butcher jargon.

VERDICT Violent and confused, even the extras are drenched in sticky bits. A disappointing blip for Guy Pearce but still worth a view for Pearce devotees.

★★★★★ Ceri Thomas



A BRIDGE TOO FAR: SPECIAL EDITION

Released Out Now Director Richard Attenborough
Starring Dirk Bogarde Year 1977

Dubbed "a film too long" by critical wags and accused of inaccuracy upon its 1977 release, Sir Richard Attenborough's epic exploration of military failure deserves a kinder reassessment. Recounting how a wildly ambitious Allied battle plan fell apart thanks to poor luck, poor equipment and poor, poor planning, it anchors the confusing, multi-tiered story with shrewdly cast stars: Dirk Bogarde, Sean Connery, Anthony Hopkins, Michael Caine, Robert Redford... The list goes on.

EXTRAS This two-discer sees Dickie deliver a fans-only interview, while a cut-together commentary from crewmembers and screenwriter William Goldman is somewhat dry.

VERDICT A lacklustre third act can't obliterate the excellent action sequences, impressive scale and sincerely felt, war-is-madness message.

★★★★★ Daniel Webb

DICKIE ROBERTS: FORMER CHILD STAR

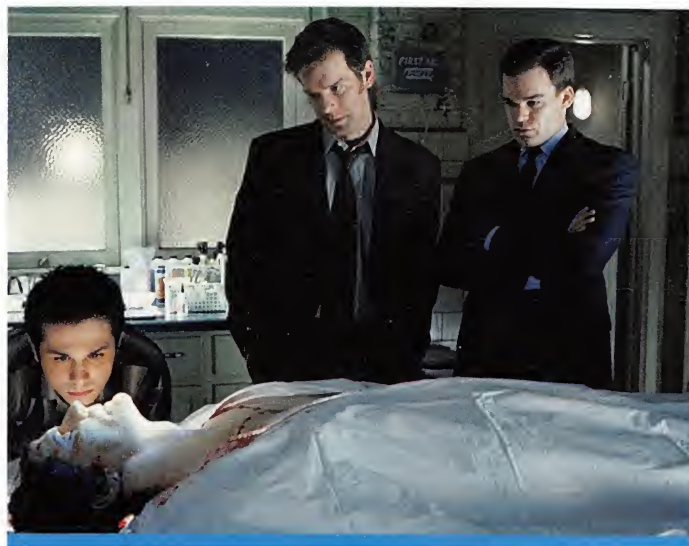
Released 28 June
Starring Nicholas Schwerin
Year 2003 Director Sam Weisman

David Spade continues on his mission to be the low-rent Adam Sandler. Horrifying proposition? Not nearly as horrifying as this one-joke dud. The plot sees Spade's 'former child star' (now a parking valet) buy his way into a family to experience real life. And find it he does, Hollywood style, the scars of bitterness and ineptitude being anointed by treacle, syrup and sugary icing.

EXTRAS Director Sam Weisman 'ums' and 'errs' his way through one bland commentary, while Spade and co-writer Fred Wolf laugh at each others' jokes on another.

VERDICT The appearance of actual child stars (including *Saved By The Bell*'s Dustin Diamond) are sporadically funny, but even their novelty value soon gets lost.

★★★★★ James White



SIX FEET UNDER: THE SECOND SERIES

The return of the living dead Fisher family is classic TV.

Released Out Now Director Various Starring Peter Krause Year 2003

With the sound of taboos snapping, *Six Feet Under* took full grasp of the creative freedom offered by subscription TV channel HBO. But like stablemate *The Sopranos*, that doesn't mean a torrent of sweary language or a barrage of flailing, sweaty, naked limbs everywhere. Just more-than-regular telly.

We pick up the show as the Fisher family continue to come to terms with their stressed relationships. As they stumble through life, surrounded by death (living and working in a funeral parlour will do that to you), we watch what happens when a superior cast are fed satisfying material. The show might primarily focus on the eldest Fisher son Nate (Peter Krause), but *Six Feet* never fails to exploit its ensemble.

EXTRAS By the time we shuffled off its mortal press coil, there were no commentaries available to tickle the old lugs, though we're promised chat tracks from creator Alan Ball and a scattering of writers and directors.

VERDICT This really is one of those shows that disproves the idiot-box theory. If you're after something dark, funny and tragic – often in the same scene – then look no further. The best series of anything since *The Sopranos*.

★★★★★ James White

THE SIMPSONS: GONE WILD

Released Out Now Year 1989-2002
Starring Dan Castellaneta Director Matt Groening

A sop to those of us unwilling or unable to stump up the cash to buy *The Simpsons* Season boxes, we're still being fed these trumped-up Best Of boxes. As collections of episodes go, it's a mixed bag. *Homer's Night Out*, from way back in Season One, is the chucklesome account of our tubby hero's embarrassment at being caught ogling a stripper by Bart's spy camera. *Sunday Cruddy Sunday* sees Homer and his drunken crowd attempt to attend the Superbowl, and *Homer The Moe* has the grouchy bartender taking a break. Fans should stick to the series box sets.

EXTRAS A short Krusty the Clown clip selection that's only useful for revisiting favourite skits. Beyond a joke.

VERDICT It's a patchy affair, but worth picking up if you're a total newcomer. Which begs the question: how many of those are left?

★★★★★ James White



THE OSBOURNES: SERIES TWO

Released 28 June Starring Ozzy Osbourne Director Katherine Brooks Year 2003

Ozzy building a fire by his beach house ("I am Log Man!"); Sharon confessing to plastic surgery ("I had Botox in my buttocks"); Kelly dragging home her stoner boyfriend only to have him cruelly quizzed by Sharon ("Now, where did you get this nickname – 'Cauliflower Dick'?"). The joy of *The Osbournes* is that it's a reality show where the characters are strong enough to rise above a jaded format. They live in a hyper-real world, but it's the strength of their love and solidarity that keeps them interesting.

The doddering patriarch is the star of the show, of course. *Withnail* style,

Ozzy's mechanism may have gone, but there's nothing wrong with his soul. The raw and impassioned phone call he makes to Sharon after learning she has cancer is heartbreaking.

VERDICT Witness key events in the Osbourne family's breakdown. Apart from Kelly's (or is that Jack's?) rehab and Ozzy's quad accident, of course.

★★★★★ James White



ANGEL

THE COMPLETE FOURTH SEASON

The best season of *Angel* to date?

Released June Director Multiple Starring David Boreanaz, Alexis Denisoff, Amy Acker Year 2003

Now that both *Buffy* and *Angel* have been put to bed, we can only revel in the past glories and successes of these two (to borrow an expression from *Bill and Ted*) "most excellent" and most venerable of series'. Although *Angel* was born of *Buffy*, I've always felt that *Angel* is the superior show of the two. The city setting is grittier and allows for a greater range of story telling possibilities, and it's targeted at an older demographic without losing the clever dialogue and humour. Oh, and where Charisma Carpenter goes, it's hard not to follow.

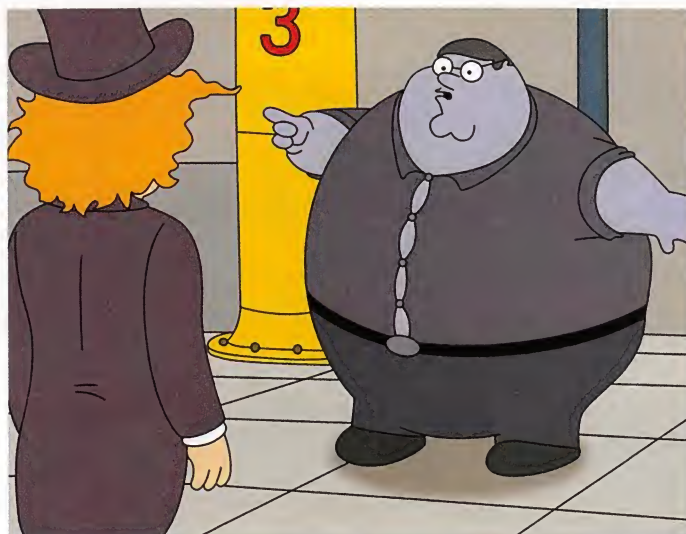
Season 4 was one of the strongest seasons in the show's run – not just because of two excellent big bads and the culmination of events from both *Angel* and *Buffy* past, but also in terms of developing the characters even further; giving them more depth, more reasons to fight, and more shades of grey. Wesley's increasingly hard boiled attitude is the prime example – once prissy and shallow, the weight of events have transformed him into a morally ambiguous character where the ends justify the means, and a kick ass fighter. He's come a long way from his "rogue demon hunter" days that's for sure.

The events of season four begin with *Angel* at the bottom of the ocean, put there by his own son (who was, as is standard parenting practices in the *Angel* canon, raised in a hell dimension), and things only get worse from there. L.A. soon faces an apocalypse, which is actually only the prelude to an even bigger threat – a god-like being that threatens to transform human life into a utopian wonderland... with the tradeoff being a loss of free will. And that's what's so great about *Angel* – nothing is black and white, and (almost) no creature is either entirely good or entirely evil. Get it.

EXTRAS The usual smattering of commentaries and featurettes. If you own the previous box sets you'll know what to expect.

VERDICT One of the best seasons from one of the best shows to hit television screens in years.

★★★★★ Cam Shea



THE FAMILY GUY

THE COMPLETE SECOND SEASON

We liked this better than we like taffy... and we love our taffy.

Released September Director Multiple Starring Seth MacFarlane, Seth Green, Alex Borstein Year 2003

A graduate of the Matt Groening school of animated hilarity, *The Family Guy* is arguably the best comedy series to come out of the US in the last five years. Its primary strength is that it is a show completely unafraid of extreme absurdity, with episodes pockmarked by lengthy tangents into comedic surrealism that are as ingenious as they are baffling. For example, the very first episode in this two DVD set features a 10-minute *Matrix Revolutions* style karate fight between Peter – the eponymous "family guy" – and a giant chicken. While this is precisely the kind of oddness that turned many off Seth MacFarlane's work, it is precisely the reason we love it.

The most important aspect of the second season is the way in which it broadens the scope of the show by introducing a variety of awesome secondary characters and guest stars that complement the core cast perfectly and keep things feeling fresh. Mayor Adam West – who is actually voiced by the old-school *Batman* star himself – is quite possibly the greatest example of an insane old man since the father from *The Critic*. The only complaint we have in regard to the characters in season two is that some of them – particularly the son, Chris – feel underutilised despite the fact that they clearly have the potential to be very goddamn funny. It's an unavoidable consequence of having such a large cast, but is frustrating nonetheless.

EXTRAS Very few extras to speak of – and that's a real shame. Surely some cast interviews wouldn't have gone astray?

VERDICT *The Family Guy* is a truly excellent program and really starts to hit its stride in season two. The characters, the absurdity and the complete indifference to the whims of political correctness make it a necessary purchase for any fan of intelligent animated comedy.

★★★★★ Daniel Staines

GAME BREAKER

■ Delivering the best tips and cheats for the biggest games every month.

Cheat of the Month

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

Hitman: Contracts keeping you awake at night? If you want to complete every mission with a Silent Assassin rating and unlock all the hidden weapons, simply enter this cheat code during normal play.

SILENT ASSASSIN RATING
R2, L2, ↑, ↓, ×, L3,
●, ×, ●, ×



TRANSFORMERS

Stomp through each level instantly by inputting the following codes at the difficulty select screen.

ALASKA LEVEL COMPLETE
R1, ●, R1, ■, ←(x2), →, ←

DEEP AMAZON LEVEL COMPLETE
←, →, ←(x2), →, R1, R2, ●

EARTH LEVEL COMPLETE
R2, R1, L1, L2, ■, ●, ■, ●

MID ATLANTIC LEVEL COMPLETE

●, ■, ●, ■, →, ←(x2), →

STARSHIP LEVEL COMPLETE

←(x2), →, ●(x2), →(x2), ←



ONIMUSHA BLADE WARRIORS

To unlock a number of secret characters you must first complete the game with normal characters, then fight in Vs mode and defeat these unlocked characters.

GIRAMUSAIDO
Have Musaido reach level 3 or above

GOGANDANTESS
Complete the game with Samanosuke Akechi, Kaede, Normal Soldier and Maeda Keijirou in Story mode

JAIDO
Have Normal Genma/Sword Foot Light reach level 2 or above

JUJUDORMAH RAN
Complete the game with Jujudormah (Level 3 or above) in Story mode

MAGOICHI SAIGA
Fight 200 battles in Vs. mode

MARCELLUS MODIFY P
Have Marcellus reach level 2

MARCELLUS MODIFY S
Have Marcellus reach level 3 or above

MIYAMOTO MUSASHI
Clear the game with Normal Soldier (Level 3 or above) in Story mode



MUSAIDO
Have Three Eye reach level 2 or above

ODA NOBUNAGA
Clear the game with all 12 default characters in Story mode

ROCKMAN EXE
Clear the game with Samanosuke Akechi in Story mode

ROCKMAN EXE – BUG STYLE
Have Rockman EXE reach Level 3 or above

ROCKMAN EXE – GRAND STYLE
Have Rockman EXE reach level 2

ROCKMAN ZERO
Use Rockman EXE to collect all 3 Z-parts (red, blue, green)

ROCKMAN ZERO – PROTO FORM
Have Rockman Zero reach level 2

ROCKMAN ZERO – ULTIMATE FORM
Have Rockman Zero reach level 3 or above

SASAKI KOJIROU
Clear the game with Miyamoto Musashi in Story mode

BLUE Z-PART
Complete Phantom Realm 2 using Megaman EXE

GREEN Z-PART
Complete the Phantom Realm using Megaman EXE

RED Z-PART
Complete Story mode using Megaman EXE

ZERO
Have all 3 Z parts then beat him in Vs. mode

RAINBOW SIX 3



Choose any level from the Tom Clancy terrorist-battler by going to the start menu and entering this.

LEVEL SELECT

L1 + R2 + L2 + R1 + ◀ + ▶ +
■ + ●



WAY OF THE SAMURAI 2



It's tough being the new samurai in a small town. Make your life easier with these codes.

RESTORE HEALTH

Press start to pause the game, hold L1 and R1 and press ▶, ↑, ◀, ↓, ▶, ◀, ●

INCREASE SWORD DURABILITY

Press start to pause the game, hold L1 and R2 and press ↓ (x2), ◀ (x2), ▶, ↑, ●

RANDOM SWORD

Press start to pause the game, hold L2 and R1 and press ■ (x2), ◀ (x2), ■, ▶, ●



THE X-FILES: RESIST OR SERVE

Finding Mulder and Scully's latest case too tough to crack? Then try tapping these codes in at the cheats menu under game settings.

ONE HIT KILLS

●, L2, ↓, R1, ✕

INFINITE AMMO

L1, L2, ✕, R2, R1

UNLOCK ALL BONUS FEATURES

◀, R1, L1, ↓, ●

UNLOCK ALL LEVELS

R2, ▶, L2, ↑, ■

INVINCIBILITY

↑, ■, ●, ✕, ↓

GRENADE BULLETS

✕, ●, ■, L2, R2



BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE 2



Why spend hours on end slogging away for a few measly skill points when you can get them all in an instant via the time-honoured medium of a cheat code? C'mon, you know it makes sense.

INFINITE HEALTH AND LEVEL WARP

Hold L1 + R1 + ▲ + ■ + ● + ✕ and then press Start during play. Press ● after using the level warp option

LEVEL 10, 45 FEAT POINTS AND 500,000 GOLD

Hold L1 + R1 + ▲ + ■ + ● + ✕ and then press L2 during play



GHOST RECON: JUNGLE STORM



Sigh. It's another one-shot one-kill Clancy epic. Make life easier for yourself by pausing the game while playing as a support troop during the Cuban operation and entering the following code.

ALL MISSIONS AVAILABLE

R1(x4), ✕, ●, L1 + L2



ASK THE BOFFIN

Your queries fed direct into the giant cranium of our resident games boffin.

BOX CLEVER

I'm having trouble lining up the blurred visions of the referee in *Fight Night 2004*, so every time I get knocked down it's the end of the contest.
Steve Jenkins, Para Hills

BOFFIN >> The trick is not to focus on the actual faces of the referee. Instead, concentrate on a smaller, more distinct item such as his bow tie or the EA Sports logo on his striped shirt. Or you could just try dodging and blocking punches so you don't get knocked down in the first place.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

The Suffering is such a dark game that I need the flashlight switched on constantly. Short of finding every extra battery, is there any way around this problem?

Darren Irvine, Newcastle

BOFFIN >> The Boffin is always willing to shed light on any problem. Try leaving your flashlight switched on even after the battery has run out. Save your game, reload and – hey presto! – the flashlight should now magically work without batteries.

SOBER UP

How do I beat the drunken barkeeper in Chapter 18 of *Rise to Honour*? He keeps drowning poor Jet Li!

Craig McGarvie, Erskineville

BOFFIN >> Your only hope is to counter his attacks and then dunk him while he's stunned. Avoid him when he does his drunken master jig and also just after you knock him down. If he grabs you, slap both analogue sticks as quickly as possible to break free from his grip and an enforced dip!

GONE
BUT NOT
FORGOTTEN

Classic game
cheats dug up
and dusted off!



RED FACTION 2

Overthrow the government by entering these codes at the cheat menu before blasting the hell out of all and sundry. If only it were that simple in real-life, eh?

BULLET GIBS

● [x4], ▲, ✕, ● [x2]

FIRE BULLETS

■ [x8]

INFINITE AMMO

■, ▲, ✕, ●, ■, ●, ✕, ▲,

UNLOCK ALL LEVELS

●, ■, ✕, ▲, ■, ●, ✕ [x2]

SUPER HEALTH

✕ [x2], ■, ▲, ■, ▲, ●

WACKY DEATHS

▲ [x8]



PITFALL: THE LOST EXPEDITION



Avoid any embarrassing pitfalls with these codes. You'll need to tap them in at the title screen while holding L1 and R1. You only swing when you're winning.

CANTEEN POINTS STAY FULL

←, ■, ●, ↓, ■, ✕, ■, ●

PLAY AS NICOLE

←, ↑, ↓, ↑, ●, ↑ [x2]

LOST CAVERNS APPEARS ON THE NEW GAME/LOAD GAME SCREEN
←, →, ←, →, ▲ [x3]

PLAY AS THE ORIGINAL [2D]
PITFALL HARRY

▲, ←, ↓, ■, ●, ▲ [x2], ←

UNLOCKS ORIGINAL PITFALL

● [x2], ←, →, ●, ■, ✕, ↑, ●

CY GIRLS



Complete the game with the two main laydeez to unlock extra violent types.

COFFY

Complete Aska's game on any difficulty

PLAY AS BENIGUMO

Complete Aska's Disc/side of the game

UNLOCK X

Defeat Ice's game on any difficulty

FIREFIGHTER F.D 18



Blaze through the game no sweat to unlock these extra hot goodies. The puns are endless.

DEAN "MAX" MCGREGOR

Find all of the lost items

MISS CRIMSON

Complete the game with over one million points as Dean "Max" McGregor

LEVEL SELECT

Complete the game



FALLOUT: BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL



Unlock three extra characters by getting to certain chapters in the game.

PATTY

Complete the first chapter

RHOMBUS

Complete the second chapter

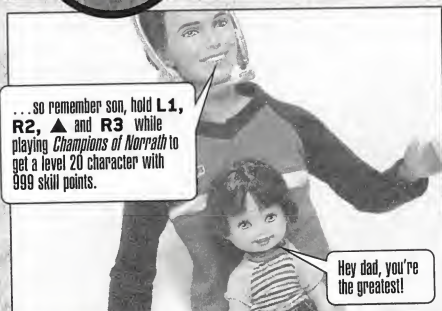
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HYPER

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26 THINGS TO SEE AND DO IN THE GETAWAY

With all the hype surrounding the sequel to this Mockney gangland caper you may well be tempted to dust down the original. While you're at it, why not have a go at some of these?



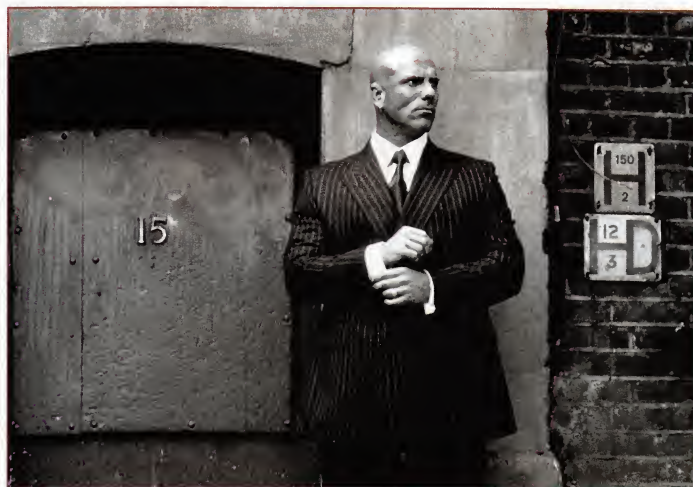
01 BE A LAW ABIDING CITIZEN

Sure, driving around at a hundred miles an hour, shooting policemen and being a bastard is all well and good, but sometimes you just want to be a good citizen. *The Getaway* gives you the chance to do just that. By pressing L1 or L2 while driving in Free Roam mode you can indicate before taking a turn. How awfully considerate.



02 LOOK MOM, NO HANDS!

Use the analogue stick to turn the car and watch in awe as your man Tanner turns the steering wheel. Now try using the digital pad to turn instead, and watch in even greater awe as Tanner steers the car using only the power of his mind. Spooky, eh?



05 GRINDS BONES TO MAKE BREAD

If you wander the streets around Buckingham Palace you should occasionally see people wildly out of perspective with their environment trudging about. It shouldn't be long before you see huge men, many times the height of a building, barrelling down the road without a care in the world. Someone gave us a technical explanation of why this happens but it was so boring we had to have them shot for being so dull. Oh, okay. It's got something to do with perspective apparently.



03 OPEN AN IMAGINARY DOOR

When you take to the Golf cart, you'll instantly notice that it has no doors. You'll notice, but your man sadly won't and he'll try to open an invisible door before slotting himself down into the vehicle. Next thing you know he'll be looking to try and open the sunroof. Funny that.



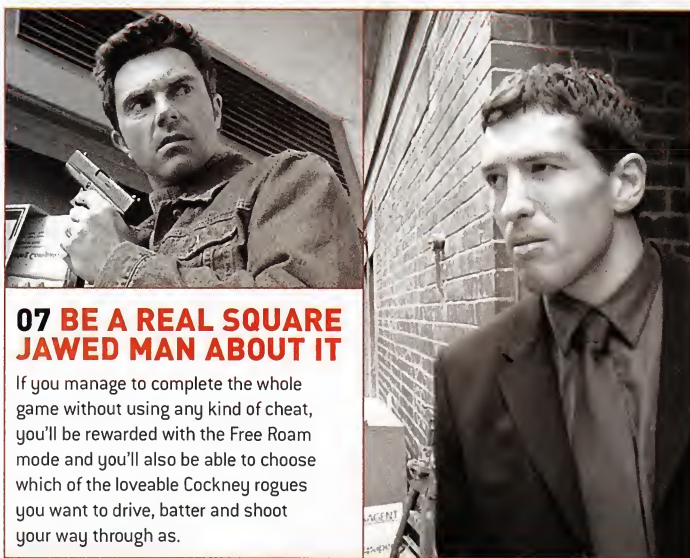
04 MASSACRE ON PIGEON STREET

Pigeons are nothing more than rats with wings. We know this despite Pigeon Street's best efforts to persuade us otherwise. So why not head to Soho square and aim up into the sky where you'll see loads of 'em circling around, laughing at you through their evil beaks. Shoot them dead.



06 RELIVE THE 'BT INCIDENT'

If you have an early version of the game, you'll get the chance to murder cops while disguised as a BT engineer. Sadly, if you have a later copy, you'll have to settle for running people over in a stolen Royal Mail van for your corporate murdering needs.



07 BE A REAL SQUARE JAWED MAN ABOUT IT

If you manage to complete the whole game without using any kind of cheat, you'll be rewarded with the Free Roam mode and you'll also be able to choose which of the loveable Cockney rogues you want to drive, batter and shoot your way through as.



08 KILL ALL INNOCENT HOSTAGES

We couldn't help but feel a little perturbed by this programming anomaly as we played through *The Getaway*, so we're going to pull out our big red pens and draw a huge "X – See Me!" next to it. You see, when you play through as Mark Hammond – a man who's apparently had enough of killing people – you still have absolutely no choice but to kill any hostages he takes, despite such actions bearing no relevance to the plot.



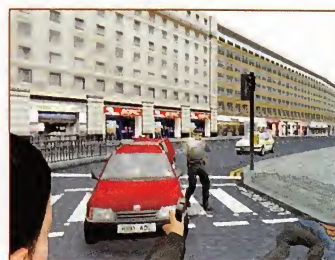
09 KILL, KILL AND KILL AGAIN

Do you want to have infinite ammunition but no reloads for your weapons? Then try pressing the following during the movie sequence that plays before the main menu appears: Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, Up, Down, Left, Right, Square. Get it right and you should hear a woman groan. Then you'll be as destructive as a large group of men armed with guns shooting in unison, yet you'll be doing it all on your own.



10 SEE THE WHOLE LOT FOR FREE

To unlock Free Roam mode press Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Left, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Left, Circle during the movie sequence that plays before the main menu appears. A groaning woman lets you know it's worked. Off you go then.



11 TWICE THE MAN YOU USED TO BE

Want double health for your personal criminal? Press Up, Up, Left, Left, Right, Right, Circle, Circle, Down during the movie sequence before the main menu. Listen for the groaning woman again, and prepare for an orgy of violence.



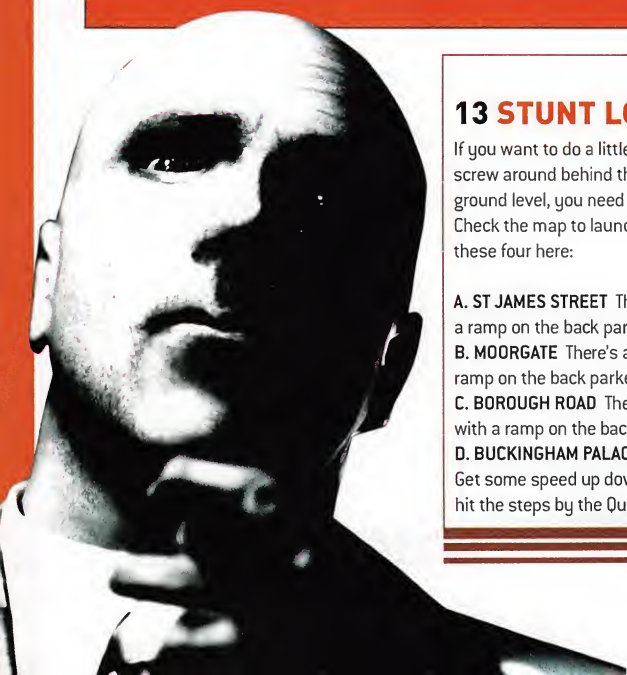
12 GO AND VISIT PSW'S UK OFFICE

If you drive down Baker Street and park up outside number 99, you'll see where the UK version of your favourite magazine gets put together. Shoot up around the second floor and you might just hit one of the pasty faced pommy gits.

L O N D O N

FREE TEST DRIVES

Get the best motors and then find some ramps to drive them off. Get busy.



13 STUNT LONDON

If you want to do a little more than just screw around behind the wheel at ground level, you need to find ramps. Check the map to launch your motor of these four here:

- A. ST JAMES STREET** There's a truck with a ramp on the back parked here.
- B. MOORGATE** There's a truck with a ramp on the back parked here too.
- C. BOROUGH ROAD** There's also a truck with a ramp on the back parked here.
- D. BUCKINGHAM PALACE** Get some speed up down the Mall and hit the steps by the Queen Vic memorial.





14 CHALLENGES | Try these on for size.



DEAD WIFE RACING

Start up the game and see how quickly you can get from Hammond's wife biting the bullet, through the streets of London, past the goons to a nasty beating at the end of the first mission.

SILVER	15 minutes
GOLD	13 minutes
PLATINUM	12 minutes



HOSTAGE TAKER

Take a hostage and see how long you can stay alive after the police show up. You can shoot anyone you like but make sure you keep your hostage pointed at the cops or you're a dead man.

SILVER	2 minutes
GOLD	4 minutes
PLATINUM	6 minutes



RUSH HOUR

Get to the Centre Point building on Tottenham Court Road in the fastest car you can find and see how quickly you can negotiate the Oxford Street traffic all the way down to Marble Arch.

SILVER	3 minutes
GOLD	2 minutes
PLATINUM	1 minute

15 LOTUS 7

This old school classic is found in the corner of a car park in St Thomas Street.



21 GOLF CART

This open-air summer special is hidden behind some trees in Hyde Park.



16 NISSAN SKYLINE

To the west, just off the map down the driveway, parked outside the mansion.



16 ROYAL PARKS HIJET

This extension of the law is hidden behind a blue shack in Hyde Park.



17 TVR CERBERA

To the west, just off the map down the driveway, parked outside the mansion.



23 LOTUS ESPRIT

Down an alleyway at the northend of Baker Street near Marylebone Rd.



18 LOTUS M250

To the west, just off the map down the driveway, parked in the garage.



24 SAAB CONCEPT

Bottom floor of the underground car park on the road south of Frith Street.



19 GO-KART

To the west, just off the map down the driveway, parked in the garage.



25 ARMORED CAR

Sitting pretty behind the iron fence on the south side of Birdcage Walk.



20 PEUGEOT 306

In a car park at the western end of the long blue wall on Horseferry Road.



26 MUSTANG

Found in a car park at the western end of the long blue wall on Horseferry Road.



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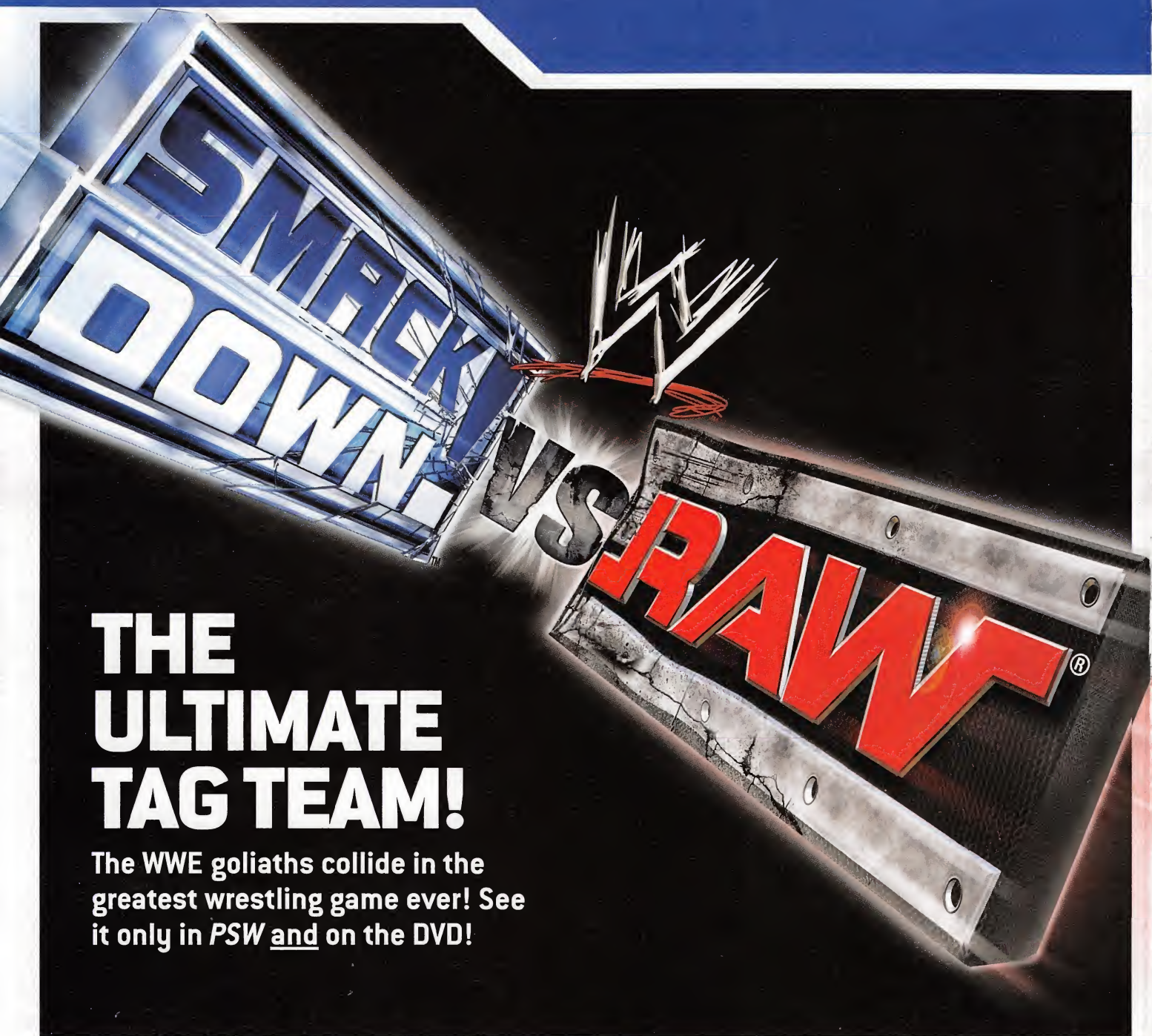
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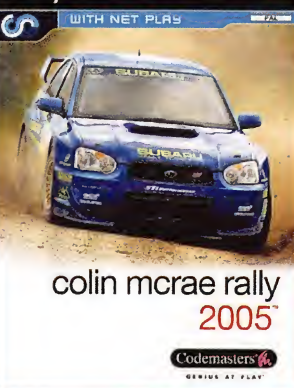
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




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